

THE ENGLISH REVIEW



MARCH, 1929

Editorial Board: Walter Scott's House of Commons

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Correspondence

Prohibition

To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

SIR,—Admiral Kerr invites his readers to consider his "facts." I should like to draw attention to two of them which deal with a subject of which I have some knowledge.

1. "Lunatic asylums are disappearing with great rapidity." The only thing to be said about this is that it is absolutely untrue, and there is no difficulty in verifying this.

2. "In every case of investigating an immigrant of weak intellect or criminal propensities, he found that the individual's parents or grandparents had been addicted to alcoholism." All careful and controlled scientific research on this subject goes to show that intemperance in parents does not stand in a causal relationship to weak intellect and criminal tendency in the offspring. In England excess in alcohol is responsible for only a very small proportion of cases of mental disease at all, in spite of ultracrepidarian views to the contrary.

The actual facts as to the relationship of mental disease to alcoholism in America are that cases of insanity due to alcohol showed a steady numerical decrease from about 1909 to 1920 with the single exception of the year 1917 (when America entered the war); in 1920 (the first year of Prohibition), a sudden fall occurred, and since then there has been a steady rise up to the present year. I would submit that there is no such thing as a "drink question" in England; most of us who are old enough have been able to watch evolution dealing effectively with this matter in a way that legislation, with its clumsy bludgeon striking both the innocent and the guilty, can never do.

Yours, etc.,

JAMES R. WHITWELL, M.B.

Royal Societies Club.

To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW.

SIR,—Admiral Mark Kerr's letter in January's issue reads very much like a summary from a pamphlet of the leading Prohibitionist organization in this country. Prohibition in America, in a word, and according to Admiral Kerr, has cured all and every social evil, and hasn't even a debit side to its account!

But has it? Let us just take one or two of his most salient points to find out whether we can place any reliance in the general statements

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of the unnamed millionaires, governors, big business men and others whom he so lavishly quotes.

He tell us that one of "the Republican representatives" at the big party gathering at Chicago informed him that "lunatic asylums were disappearing." Now what are the facts, not only with regard to Chicago, but with regard to the whole of the country generally? In 1910 there were in American asylums 187,791 patients, a ratio of 2.04 per thousand of the population; in 1920 they increased to 232,680 and 2.20 respectively; in 1923 they further increased to 267,617 and 2.45, and yet Admiral Kerr, on the authority of an unnamed Republican representative, tells us that lunatic asylums are disappearing with "great" rapidity!

Admiral Kerr repeats what a Kansas millionaire told him, that, as a result of Prohibition, the office of sheriff in that State has become almost defunct; they had no one in the State prison for fifteen years; they had ceased breeding lunatics, and poor houses had ceased to exist. Again he has been sadly misinformed. The State prison, according to the official returns, had a population on January 1, 1923, of 4,039, an increase of 25 per cent. on the figure for 1910! On the same date they had 3,402 people confined to their lunatic asylums, and 979 paupers as compared with 2,912 and 735 respectively in 1910.

One could go on indefinitely with the whole of Admiral Kerr's quotations, because they are so obviously the statements of partisans; and before he rushes into print again he might back up anything he has to say with official records. This, at least, is due to the readers of his letters who, by accepting his statements as a true indication of the effect of Prohibition in America, are being sadly misled.

Yours, etc.,

W. GRACEY.

193 Upland Road, East Dulwich.

Walter Scott's Heroic Struggle

To the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW

SIR,—Your contributor, Mr. Milligan, is wrong in stating that *John Ballantyne & Co.*, established in 1809, was carried on till 1826. John died in 1821, leaving Scott £2,000 that he did not possess and declaring in his memorandum that, when his publishing business was wound up in 1817, Scott was fully paid and a balance of £1,000 was over. Lockhart, however, says that John's name was "on floating bills to the extent of at least £10,000"—a debt which was assumed by James Ballantyne & Co., printers, which was established when James received "a liberal loan" from Sir Walter in 1802 to set up as a printer in Edinburgh.

Although Mr. Milligan's access to the Minute Books has resulted in many details regarding Scott's financial affairs being brought to

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Current Comments

IN a world of changing values two historic institutions stand at this moment more secure in their influence and strength than for many decades. One is the British monarchy and the other the Papacy. That the one-time antagonism between these august institutions is a thing long past adds to the strength of both and to their power for good. It is easy for sceptics to say that the English monarchy is only a disguised republic and that the new status of the Papacy is a mere technicality. Falsehood is always easy. The facts are wholly to the contrary. The anxiety evoked by His Majesty's illness and the relief universally felt at the very distinct improvement which took place throughout February were a striking demonstration, not merely of personal regard, but of the strength of a still living patriotism. The realization by all classes that there is a power above parties to which loyalty is not only due but natural is not something to be taken lightly for granted in a modern democracy. It is a conviction which is the precise opposite of that belief in the absolute power of secular majorities to which too many of our politicians pay lip-service without understanding what they are doing, and to which some at least of our politicians subscribe with a full knowledge of its implications.

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IT is for very similar reasons that the recognition by Italy of the temporal sovereignty of the Pope over his minute territories is an event of world importance. It does not, of course, involve any change in the attitude of any one toward the doctrines of Roman Catholicism.

The Temporal Power

It is bound to mean an increasing influence among the nations for that traditional morality which is the heritage which the Roman Catholic shares with the other Christian churches. Just as our own monarchy symbolizes and so maintains the respect for the principles of historic continuity and national well-being to which the immediate needs of individuals must be subjected, so the Papacy, recognized as a secular State, symbolizes the permanent validity of defined moral principles in the world of secular politics. To some, one symbol, to some, the other will inevitably be distasteful. The Nation-state living in and by its history is not a State which can ever tolerate the dictatorship, for instance, of the proletariat. A society of nations which recognizes an international religious organization as a secular power is in the same way a society which cannot claim to set aside the rights of conscience on political grounds.

IT is being said by Catholics as well as others that the new accord between the Vatican and Italy will intensify the "Italian" character of the Roman Church, and that the Church will be used by Italy as an instrument of its own, not necessarily pacific, policy. Englishmen,

The Papacy and Italy

whatever their beliefs, would naturally and rightly be hostile to either tendency, but the reasoning behind their fears is faulty. The *concordat* between the Church and the State in Italy means the addition of Italy to the number of the specifically Catholic States, but it has not been reached by any modification of traditional policy, and every one of its provisions has precedents in other countries. What the result will be is to give to the Catholic Church in Italy the national character which it already enjoys, for instance, in Spain and in Poland. Its effect, in other words, is to de-Vaticanize (if one may coin

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the word) the Church in Italy, not to Italianize the Vatican. The fear that the Vatican diplomatic machine will be used in the service of Italian secular politics is equally baseless. The Vatican has no interest in debasing its own influence in this way. Throughout the last seventy years its international influence has been growing, not declining. The Italian action is the result of that growth, which, in the judgment of her statesmen, made the renewal of diplomatic relations essential to Italian prestige. By prejudicing her international position, which has won for her an important diplomatic success, the Vatican, to put it on the lowest grounds, would have everything to lose.

JANUARY has been a bad month for Mr. Baldwin's Government. The recent by-elections are not, statistically, very ominous. They show a surprising

The fall in the Labour poll, which is in contradiction with all precedents. When we remember that an opposition candidate at a by-election rallies to his side every single discontented voter, this fall is almost inexplicable. But the fall in the Conservative poll has been even more marked. The opposition policy is, of course, to represent themselves at this stage, and until the election, as a very moderate, level-headed, mild-mannered, intelligent alternative Government. "Peace and trade," says the *New Statesman*, "are Mr. MacDonald's plain and homely ideals."

THE only comment on this is that it is either pitiful self-deception or impudent and discreditable humbug.

Self-deception Mr. MacDonald is a sincere and able man, but he is not a mild-mannered intellectual
or with views on social reform whose sole
Humbug object is to improve dividends. He is the leader of the Socialist Party, whose object is to nationalize industry in the interests of the proletariat. His policy is not unknown. It is printed and published, and it is a revolutionary policy without qualification. He believes in State ownership and control of industry. He believes in the nationalization of land.

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He also believes in forcing up the standard of living to a guaranteed minimum, a policy which, in the view of the majority of responsible people, cannot be begun without the wholesale spoliation of a vast minority of the country, and which cannot be maintained except by a tyranny precisely similar to that which exists in Russia.

So much for the aims of the Labour Party. Now for their methods. The *New Statesman* would have us

**The
Menace
of Force**

believe that a reference to Russian methods is in this connection as "silly," "prejudiced," or "merely partisan" as a reference to Russian policies. But why are we supposed to ignore the action of half the leaders of Labour less than three years ago? No one imagines that the Parliamentary Labour Party is going to use the industrial weapon to get measures carried out which it can carry out by constitutional means; but what reason is there to suppose that these means will suffice? What reason is there to suppose that a Trade Union Congress, possessing the power, will not use it to influence its nominal leaders who are in fact its servants? We must after all give Mr. Ramsay MacDonald the credit for thinking that his policy, disastrous as others believe it to be, is the only policy which can save this country. *Salus populi suprema lex*. Mr. Baldwin used all the resources of the State, including the armed forces of the Crown, to break the general strike. Why should Mr. Ramsay MacDonald be less squeamish in the use of force? He is openly advocating a revolutionary policy; why should he boggle at employing the means ready to his hand? One answer could be that the Labour Party is irrevocably opposed to the use of industrial weapons for political ends. The other, and correct, answer is that half the members of Labour's shadow-Cabinet have not merely advocated the use of these weapons, but have used them.

I HAVE used the phrase "a revolutionary policy."

A Revolutionary Programme It is well in these matters to "speak by the book." Here is a selection from the printed and published aims of the Labour Party:—

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The repeal of the Trade Union Act.

The transfer to public ownership of the local transport and power industries (on which every other industry depends).

The more stringent control of banking and credit.

The extension of the powers of the economic section of the League of Nations (necessarily at the expense of national sovereignty).

The transference of land to public ownership.

The collective purchase of imported grain and meat.

The provision of an adequate supply of houses at rents within the means of the workers (which means, of course, that the rents of one-half of the community are to be permanently paid by the other half).

The break-up of the Poor Law.

The direct increase of purchasing power in the hands of the workers.

The systematic, universal, thoroughgoing application of the policy of fixing standards of life and employment.

Adequate provision for unemployed workers.

Maintenance allowance for children under fifteen.

THIS programme may be wise and humane; but it is certainly revolutionary. Between the principle on which all civilizations, past and present, have been built up—the principle of the individual's responsibility for himself and his family—and the Socialist principle of the State's responsibility for the welfare

of the individual, there can be no compromise. Mr. MacDonald realizes this, as he shows in one pregnant phrase when he advocates "the break-up" of the Poor Law. Between the Socialist principle that the State is responsible for guaranteeing a livelihood and our present principle that the State is responsible for relieving destitution there is absolutely nothing in common. To put the Socialist principle into practice, the present Poor Law, which enshrines the opposite principle, has to be not amended, but broken. Further, let it be clearly realized that while the differences between the Labour Party's Socialism and our present system are fundamental, those between Socialism and the Russian experiment are only superficial. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald may put the maintenance of the sovereignty of Parliament in his programme, but the safeguard is meaningless. In the

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first place, a revolution is none the less a revolution for being carried out under popular sanctions. In the second, where a business is threatened with ruin by the policy of its directors, it is no consolation for the minority of shareholders to reflect that, when the ruin has been accomplished, the majority may change their minds as to the wisdom of their policies. The whole point of Mr. Churchill's attack on Socialism is that it is a policy which, once launched, cannot be either maintained or revised without ruin. Quite obviously, if he is right, the Socialists will in time be swept from power, irrespective of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's zeal for Parliamentary supremacy. But that is no consolation.

THE battle which has to be fought against subversive policies at home has, of course, nothing whatever to do

Trade with Russia	with the question of trade with Russia. The principal point to be considered is, Will a serious and systematic renewal of trading relations with Soviet Russia mitigate the
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sufferings of our own people? The renewal of relations is bound, without question, to help English trade. Trade with Russia is not only a benefit to ourselves but the most likely road to the restoration of normal conditions in the Soviet republics. There is going to be no revolution in Russia, but things are at such a pass that such order and decency as at present subsists may finally dissolve unless something is done. Europe, and in particular England, has never for this reason been in a better position to make favourable arrangements and to exact adequate guarantees.

THE present position, roughly, is this. The Soviet experiment has failed to conciliate the peasants and to

The Present and the Future	give an adequate standard of living to the towns. There are those in Russia who say that this failure, manifesting itself tragically in discontent, food shortage and a creeping paralysis of the machinery of civilization, is due to a lack of ruthlessness on the part of the Government and to foreign influences. This is the
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doctrine of the Left, and in particular of the irreconcilables in the Third International. There are others who say that the root cause of the crisis is economic, and that with adequate financial assistance and the development of the policy of concessions prosperity will return. Between these two parties stands the present Government—willing, it is believed, to seek foreign co-operation, if reasonable, unable indefinitely to remain idle in the face of a boycott. In these circumstances to confuse the question of reopening trade with Russia with the equally urgent necessity of combating the spread of subversive Socialist propaganda in our own country is not only short-sighted but actually calculated to perpetuate the worst results of Bolshevism in Russia.

THE incidents in the House of Commons last week in connection with the attempt of the Government to

whittle down the compensation to Irish "Loyalists" were not creditable to the Government. The tribunal which examined their claims may not have been a judicial body, but it was certainly honest; and the only ground on which the Government could claim to set aside its recommendations would be the ground of incompetence. What is impossible is to set aside some recommendations and to accept others. What reason under heaven is there to suppose, if some of the recommendations are not acceptable, that any of them are? And what reason is there for confidence that the recommendations, if they erred at all, did not err on the side of giving too little? The debt is a debt of honour. The damage suffered by these unfortunate people was the result of the action or inaction of our Government. To treat the payments to be made as anything else is to offer an intolerable affront to the public conscience. Rightly, the Treasury must insist on a rigid investigation of claims. They are as much bound in honour not to pay more than is due as to pay what is due. But when a satisfactory investigation has been carried out, the matter is wholly ended. It only remains to pay, and this the Government has at last agreed to do.

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I AM glad to see that another attempt to widen the power of the executive in undefined circumstances to make "orders" which have the force of law was defeated on the report stage of the Local Government Bill. I should have more sympathy, however, with our legislators in their protests against the tyranny of the Civil Service if they showed less reluctance themselves to perpetuate petty restrictions on our liberties. Tyranny is none the less tyranny because it is carried out by a popular assembly. Students of revolutionary history know this well enough, and it is a pity the general public and Press are so apt to forget it. It may be good journalism to hold up the unfortunate Jix (who at least can defend himself) or the Civil Service (who cannot) as the bogey-men who curtail our freedom. But the real culprits are the House of Commons who are extremely jealous of their own rights, *vis-à-vis* the executive, but intolerably careless of the rights of the individual.

THE American Senate has voted the cruiser programme, but the hope that this would mean a temporary cessation of "peace talk" was unfortunately ill-founded. The talk instead has drifted to more dangerous ground, and the freedom of the seas is taking first place. There can, and will, be no agreement on this question except under a formula so vague as to be meaningless. The whole question, indeed, is purely academic, once parity is conceded, as it has been, between Great Britain and America. Obviously we shall not in future be able to blockade a third party against the wishes of America, and except on terms agreeable to America (unless we are prepared to fight America). A quarter, or three-quarters, of a blockade is no blockade at all, and the question of "rights" for this reason no longer exists except academically. To try to define in advance the conditions on which, and the limits within which, America would allow us, or we would allow America, to blockade a third party is mere waste of time. To call such time-wasting a move toward peace is simply idiotic. On the other hand, the denial of the right

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of blockade in any circumstances otherwise than by joint international action is a proposal which no island Power could even discuss, unless it was prepared to sink to the level of Luxembourg, a principality guaranteed by the great military nations. These considerations are so evident that it would seem unnecessary to set them down but for the nonsense which is being written on a quite simple subject elsewhere.

THE raising of the Bank Rate to $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. may prove to be a blow to the Government and a triumph for those who

The
Bank
Rate

suggested that the limit on the fiduciary issue of currency notes was placed too low.

The effect of "dear money" must be, of course, not higher but lower prices, brought

about by the contraction in purchasing power and the liquidation of stocks. Theoretically such a movement is balanced by reductions in money wages, real wages remaining the same. There are, however, two important factors, one of which prevents the position from being adjusted except over long periods and at grievous cost, while the other is a permanent irritant. The first factor is that wage reductions have to be negotiated in the face of an opposition which is pardonably sceptical of the justification for them. Although real wages (measured in terms of the price of necessities) have, in fact, increased since 1924 by as much as 4 per cent. (according to Professor Bowley) the reductions in money wages have aroused a bitterness which is still felt. The second factor is that every reduction in money wages means an increase in the cost of a large number of non-essential things which are paid for in small units incapable of reduction or in traditional amounts; newspapers, omnibuses, stamps, beer and cigarettes, cinema seats, football admission fees have all *increased in cost* with the appreciation of sterling. The psychological importance of this factor is very great and is almost universally overlooked. All of us except the very rich judge unconsciously of the extent of our "hardupness" by the amount of money we have in our pockets to spend, not by the amount we have at the bank to meet the bulk of our outgoings.

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THE application of the wool trades for a safeguarding duty raises a very interesting point in the relationship of real to nominal wages. The main ground for the application is the low rate of wages paid to textile workers in France. The labour cost to the French manufacturer is not only low relatively to the price he can get from England for his goods, but also absolutely, in relation to his other costs of production. It is being generally assumed that this means that the French standard of living is lower than ours. But is this so? The point is one for expert inquiry. It is not easy to accept the view put forward. The general impression of a traveller in provincial France is of a standard of life definitely higher than our own. The cheapness of necessities, outside tourist centres, is astonishing, and in the mining villages of the industrial North the housing accommodation is infinitely better than in the North of England. The answer, I believe, is to be found in two things. One is that the Frenchman is a better spender and a harder worker, and though he works longer hours, he gets the benefit of the longer hours that others work. The other is that the French have an infinitely wider variety of currency and a much lower minimum unit. The French penny, which, as in England, will buy a tram ticket and (thanks to M. Coty) a newspaper, is worth less than a fifth of the English penny, and the 25 *centime* piece, which will buy many more things in France than a penny will in England, is worth less than a halfpenny.

THE month has seen three important events in industry. The first is the refusal of the Employers' Association to be parties to the National Industrial Council proposed by the Mond-Turner Conference. The second is the Prime Minister's refusal to do anything before the General Election to meet the demands of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation for an immediate inquiry into safeguarding. The third is the completion of the arrangements for the Lancashire Cotton Combine to control more than half of the American cotton-spinning interests.

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This last is the most hopeful and the most important happening. As a result of a far-sighted readiness by the banks, the shareholders and the directors to make immediate sacrifices, there is every chance that the new combine will start clear of indebtedness, capitalized on a really conservative basis, and with sufficient "new money" (lent upon easy terms by the Bank of England) to enable the necessary "rationalization" of plant and machinery to be undertaken. Further, the centralization proposed and accepted by the separate interests will make possible such long overdue reforms as the bulk purchase of raw material, bulk disposal of waste, scientific marketing, and the specialization of output in particular mills. All this has been done long ago in France; that it has now been done here without Government interference is a welcome sign. What is still more welcome is the prospect that the combine will grow not only horizontally, by including in time all the American cotton-spinning interests, but also vertically, so as to eliminate as far as possible and reasonable the operation of the middlemen.

THOSE who understand the significance of the news from Lancashire will be less inclined to weep over the temporary hold-up of the Mond-Turner proposals than are some of our contemporaries. If the employers' attitude meant a reversion to the bad old days when the employer was a law unto himself and dared anyone to interfere with "his" business, we should regret it as much as the *Daily Herald* appears to do. The reorganization of industry is, however, a very intricate affair in which all kinds of interests other than employers and employed are concerned. A national council representing them only can never in our view do more than conduct routine negotiations over wages and conditions of work. These negotiations, however, are not everything, and by themselves are less than nothing. Half the troubles of industry are due to the concentration of the attention of Capital and Labour alike on the division of non-existent profits, at the expense of the infinitely more important question of methods of organization, manufacture, and sale.

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These matters are by their nature technical and peculiar to each industry, and each industry has to solve them for itself. It is bad enough for that solution to be impeded by past errors, such as over-capitalization or unworkable wage agreements, and to be hindered by oppressive taxation. It is at least doubtful how far it could be assisted by the deliberations of a National Industrial Council on the lines proposed. But that, within the boundaries of each industry the experienced workers of all grades have much to contribute to effective reorganization is certain. Employers who forget this would be doing a disservice to the State. Happily, there is no reason to suppose that there are many such.

THE matter of safeguarding is in a different category. We have said before that, if safeguarding is regarded
Iron and Steel openly and honestly as the necessary preliminary to lower prices, it is a wise and statesmanlike policy. Safeguarding alone will not, however, be enough in many cases to bring our costs of production down to world levels. Reorganization, amalgamation, specialization, are more and more urgently necessary. There are hints that the iron and steel trades are fully alive to this, but the hints might well translate themselves into objective signs in the interval between the present moment and the General Election. Whatever Government is in power later, the needs of the industry will receive more sympathetic consideration if they can say, like the American Cotton Spinners, that they have learnt their lesson and put their house in order as far as in them lies.

THE Russian Soviet Republic counts today 28,000,000 illiterates between fifteen and thirty-five. These figures, coming from Riga, must be accepted with
The Return of Illiteracy reserve; but the Soviet authorities admit a heavy increase in illiteracy during the last few years. Unfortunately, this is not peculiar to Soviet Russia. The spread of Socialistic legislation has reduced the standard of literacy in all

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countries, and in England very strikingly. Out of fifty girls examined recently by a friend of mine for a £5-a-week secretaryship, more than forty were in every practical sense of the term illiterate. They could not spell, and when they did spell a word rightly, they had no idea what it meant. Technically, the boys and girls of fifteen and sixteen can read and write. Intelligently, they cannot be classified as literate, much less as educated. Only yesterday I heard of an office where the office-boy thought Jerusalem was in England, and a shorthand typist thought Catholicism was a disease. I do not suspect religious prejudice in either case! There is a new attitude to education and it is a wholly bad one.

THE active intervention of the bookmakers in the Battersea election, where they appealed to "sportsmen" (by which apparently they meant the small "punters") to vote Labour, will probably hasten the reform of the Betting Tax. The "Sportsmen" public-houses used, in the bad old days, to be invaluable recruiting agents for the Conservative Party. Today the widespread ramifications of the betting interests may prove an even more valuable asset to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who is no more in sympathy with betting than Mr. Balfour (as he then was) with unlimited facilities for drinking. But such are politics.

THE proposal for a motor toll road from London to Brighton is a curious return to past practice. As recently as a hundred years ago almost every main road was a turnpike road, which meant that it was maintained by the direct users and not by the general public, who got the real benefit. The "nationalizing" of the roads began long before Socialism was heard of, because the failure of the private companies in the face of railway competition to maintain their roads in a good state of repair or to develop new ones created a public scandal. Now we prefer to go backwards and to start new turnpike roads for the benefit of motorists. The history of the old turnpike should be a

Plus
ça
Change

THE ENGLISH REVIEW

warning. The cost of building and maintaining a road can never be recovered solely from its direct users, even when such a road is the only alternative to the railway. The new road, if it is built, will sooner or later become a charge on the public, who do not want it. Why, then, desecrate some of the most beautiful country in England which the public infinitely prefers to the dubious advantages of a new "speedway" ?

THE agreement between Italy and the Vatican will add to the number of small states which are such a delight to examiners in geography. Andorra in the Pyrenees, beloved of Mr. Belloc, is the smallest ; the Republic of San Marino, which has only 38 square miles of territory, is another ; Liechtenstein, with 65 square miles, is a third ; and Monaco, which is even smaller, is a fourth. Luxembourg, with a territory of just under 1,000 square miles, is, comparatively, one of the great powers. The smallest of all European states was Orange, from which William III took his title and which remained an independent state until the eighteenth century. Its principal claim to fame today, apart from the fact that its name, but not its history, is familiar to every English schoolboy, is its superb Roman theatre, which the L.C.C. might well adopt as a standard for their licensing regulations. At any rate, it is the only theatre I have ever seen which has an adequate number of cloakrooms and exits. It was built nearly 2,000 years ago.

IN 1903 the Church of England and Nonconformist Sunday Schools had 6,309,668 scholars. Today the figure is 4,748,872. This decline in number, striking though it is, is less significant than the fact that the number of Bibles sold today is barely half that sold before the war. The plain fact is that what may be called Bible religion is losing ground. The intellectual argument has little to do with it, and the motor-car and the cinema a great deal. The social results are hard to assess. In

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France the ban on religious instruction has had a wholly bad result, and has led to a reaction which has filled the churches. We may find the same thing here, but the churches will have to decide first what they believe before they can become a dominating factor in national life.

We live in a credulous age. If we read that in the Middle Ages seven people out of twelve believed in direct communication between the devil and his servants, the witches, we should suspect a piece of anti-Catholic propaganda. However foolish some people were, we should refuse to believe that there were as many fools as all that. Yet the *Daily News*, from replies to a questionnaire, finds that seven people out of twelve do believe today that communication with the spirits of the dead has been definitely *proved*. Will one out of these seven thousand bring forward the evidence? After all, mankind has been looking for proofs of definite personal survival after death since the beginning of time. It is hard that seven thousand people should have the proof and be keeping it dark.

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

Notes from Paris

By George Adam

Modern Dictators. — Europe is passing through a peculiar phase, and the British elections are going to be more international in their effect than is usually the case. The revolutionary conservatism which has carried Mussolini and his Spanish colleague into positions of dictatorial power still keeps them prisoners. Neither in Italy nor in Spain have the two strong men been able to build up a regime strong enough to withstand the cold blasts of free criticism. The great trouble with dictators is that they have to go on dictating. A time comes when either compromise or a stand-up fight becomes inevitable. Mussolini, who is without doubt a real dictator, has managed to adorn his brows with further laurels in the shape of the agreement with the Vatican. General Primo de Rivera buzzes like an angry blue-bottle, trying to make his way through a plate-glass window, and making blunder after blunder. He hurts himself in the process, and may damage the whole regime of monarchy before he finally collapses. Like many a greater man before him, he has become a prisoner of his own acts.

Doubts about Spain. — I was in Barcelona when, with astonishing ease, he carried out his successful military *coup d'état* and travelled on to Madrid in his wake. The state of Spain, the scandals of Morocco and general political corruption called for the control of a strong man to set things on their legs again, and the new dictator was sincere when he expressed the view that his functions would be to clean up the mess and prepare the way for a National Assembly elected upon a rational basis. His first efforts at political construction would have laughed him out of any country that had the faintest beginnings of public opinion and the means of expressing it, for he solemnly installed as Government a sort of court martial composed of Brigadier-Generals. After the next demonstration made by the

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artillery corps the dictator held a referendum in conditions which made freedom of vote impossible, and then, as a crowning political joke, created his early-morning-gathered, hand-picked parliament, and formed the Patriotic Union. He has estranged every political party save, perhaps, the Socialists, and he has committed King Alfonso to an extent which that enlightened monarch can scarcely relish. Like Mussolini, but not to the same extent, he has been of economic service to his country; but the benefits received are beginning to grow a bit uncertain, thanks to the increasing cost of living, brought about by nationalist tariffs to which French traders, like their British competitors, object with growing vehemence.

M. Poincaré and the Extremists.—The collapse of the Spanish dictatorship would revive the drooping spirits of French Radicals and Socialists, and a Labour triumph in the British elections would bring their hopes to fever-point. They have already been raised by the reduction of M. Poincaré's majority to six on a vote of a typical orange-peel character, and extremists are proudly proclaiming that the Prime Minister now has by that division been deprived of the authority necessary to him if he is to deal successfully with Reparations.

The experts are finding it difficult enough to clear the undergrowth surrounding the problem, and a renewal of political instability in France would have a disastrous effect upon any prospects of a settlement. The figures of the division show that, however undependable the Chamber's support to the Government may be in special cases, there is no hope of framing a policy upon which any other voting combination can be successfully formed.

The Government and Religious Bodies.—M. Poincaré's opponents are looking forward with increased zest to another trial of strength, over the Government proposal to authorize the re-establishment of religious bodies whose missionary work has been of considerable moral support to French prestige, particularly in northern Africa and in Asia Minor. There has been a lot of political jockeying over this project already in committees, and the fight

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will be resumed again in the open in a few weeks' time, when some of M. Poincaré's moderate Radical supporters may find themselves unable to give him their votes. The reduction in his majority in the division at the end of February is not of such general political importance as to force him to resign, but a majority as small as that over the Church question would cause an immediate crisis.

The Vatican: French Reaction.—The signature of the Lateran agreement has given fresh zest to the old anti-clerical battle-cry of French radicalism. Although much of the sectarian bitterness of the fighting days of Separation has died away, any extension of the Church's influence in secular affairs will be closely watched in France. It is perhaps true to say that, had the agreement been reached with any other man than Mussolini and any other but the Fascist regime, it would not have aroused anything like so much apprehension. The Radical and Socialist Press has been busy telling its readers that the chief result of the accords will be to make Roman Catholic organizations throughout the world a propaganda machine for Fascist ideas. This is quite obviously an extremely debatable view, but it is one which makes an appeal to the minds of French people, with whom neither Mussolini nor his extreme nationalism finds favour.

The Mission to Russia

By Ernest Remnant

"The newe Navigation and discoverie of the Kingdome of Moscovia, by the Northeast, in the yeere 1553: Enterprised by Sir Hugh Willoughbie knight, and perfourmed by Richard Chancellor, Pilot major of the voyage: Written in Latine by Clement Adams.

"At what time our Marchants perceived the commodities and wares of England to bee in small request with the countreys and people about us, and neere unto us, and that those Marchandizes which strangers in the time and memorie of our auncestors did earnestly seeke and desire, were nowe neglected, and the price thereof abated, although by us carried to their owne portes: certaine grave Citizens of London, and men of great wisdom, and carefull for the good of their Country, began to thinke with themselves, howe this mischiefe might be remedied. Neither was a remedie (as it then appeared) wanting to their desires, for the avoyding of so great an inconvenience. . . .

"And whereas many things seemed necessary to bee regarded in this so hard and difficult a matter, they first made choyse of certaine grave and wise persons in maner of a Senate or companie, which should lay their heads together, and give their judgments, and provide things requisite and profitable for all occasions."—*Hakluyt's Voyages of the English Nation.*

THE needs which inspired the merchant venturers of England to explore the possibilities of trade with Muscovy in 1553 are a thousandfold greater today.

Unemployment figures prove that the most urgent need is for new markets. The Industrial Transference Board may partially distribute the incidence of unemployment over a wider area—they cannot create a new demand for labour. De-rating, by shifting burdens, may

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just turn the scale in some competitive export tenders and thus secure entry to an existing market, but, similarly, it can create no new demand.

There is only one market large enough substantially to relieve our unemployment and immediately available—Russia. If a safe way can be found to open it to British goods on a large scale, our industrial troubles will be materially eased and an acute danger to the political security of Europe removed. The problem calls for a constructive policy in which the Conservative Party can honourably take the lead, assured of the support, not only of industry and finance, but of both sections of the Opposition.

Relations between the British and Soviet Governments were broken off in 1927 in circumstances of peculiar provocation by the agents of the latter. This was probably at the moment the only effective means of penalizing the promoters of international communism, and the Conservative Party, as the guardians of public order, were justified in adopting it. But they can certainly not have contemplated—in view of the prejudice to British industrial, and even political, interests—a permanent suspension of relations between the two countries; and it would be unstatesmanlike to refuse indefinitely to review the situation. If, as I believe, the moment for review and revision has arrived, there need be no inconsistency in the adoption of a progressive policy today. The present Government have asserted their willingness to resume relations whenever they have received proof that the Soviet Government are prepared to conform to the conditions governing intercourse between civilized peoples; and, meanwhile, they have repeatedly stated that they will place no obstacles in the way of trade with Russia. A Conservative Government will be bound, however, to ensure that if Anglo-Russian relations are renewed—as sooner or later is inevitable—they shall be renewed upon an honourable and stable basis.

The question of political relations with Russia is so obscured by prejudice and its economic implications are so little understood that it has been easy for the opponents of any *rapprochement* to create the impression that trade

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is, and will be, unaffected by political recognition. American trade with Russia is constantly quoted as proof of this. The assertion is both false and foolish. No British Government could possibly consider the renewal of diplomatic relations with Russia without including the question of debts; nor is there any need to do so, since there is reason to believe that within the limits of economic possibilities the Soviet Government is prepared to make a settlement.

If so, it is obvious that restitution is being withheld from large numbers of British subjects merely to please Mr. Churchill and a few other fanatical opponents of conciliation so bankrupt of constructive ideas that they propose to make the Conservative Party ridiculous by going to the country on the sterile cry of anti-Bolshevism. Happily the sober judgment of the Conservative Party is proof against such hysterical counsels. Upon the first trustworthy evidence that the Russian Government is ready to treat in a reasonable spirit, Conservatives generally will unite with industry in seeking an agreement. Since the Treasury has dishonestly appropriated the compensation actually collected from Germany on behalf of civilian sufferers from war damage and callously refused to disgorge, it is not surprising that Mr. Churchill values his threadbare bogey more than the interests of some thousands of British creditors of Russia. Unlike the Southern Irish Loyalists, whom also Mr. Churchill, although a responsible party to their ruin, proposed to leave to their fate, the British creditors of Russia have hitherto had no champion in Parliament. Like the civilian war claimants, they will die in time, and there are not enough of them in any one constituency to turn an election. If 1,000 of them settled in Epping!

But while the interests of British creditors alone should silence the obstructionists, unless they can produce much weightier reasons than any I have yet heard, the advantages to British industry of a settlement of Russian debts are of infinitely greater importance. *For, until such a settlement has been made, there can be no acceptable basis of trade with Russia upon any considerable scale.* All statements to the contrary in Parliament or elsewhere are untrue and either ignorant or deliberately intended to

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throw dust in the eyes of the unthinking public. Every banker and financier knows better. Russia today is denuded of capital. She has been living dangerously from hand to mouth for many years, passing through first the great war, then the Revolution and civil wars, followed by years of an economic and political policy which has naturally resulted in virtual financial blockade.

Let us waste no time in apportioning blame. We are concerned only with facts as they are. Bankers, debenture holders, committees of shareholders and creditors, faced with the necessity to reconstruct an industry, to write off millions and to provide more, consider only whether the assets and the prospects are worth preserving and how best to do so. Physicians do not refuse their aid because a patient's malady may have been of his own making. Russia has a population of 120 millions, covers a sixth of the habitable globe, has natural resources greater even than those of the United States, and needs more capital for their development than any country in the world. She is reduced, no matter how or why, to the impossible task of financing her capital requirements out of precarious income. If she needs a power-station or a pipe-line, some of the population must either pay double for their boots or go without. Moreover, under present conditions, she is constantly compelled to find foreign exchange for capital requirements in excess of her trade balance, and can only do so by selling some of her produce at a loss, whether oil or manganese. Again, the balance must be restored by increasing the price of some domestic commodity. Thus not only is her economic situation aggravated, but her population is exasperated and producers in other countries are injured.

The only remedy is capital, both in the shape of loans to the State and of foreign investment in Russian enterprises. In other words, Russia cannot emerge from her present economic crisis until she has access to the money market for long-term loans and capital is once again available for investment in her industries.

The one indispensable condition which must be fulfilled before she can obtain capital is the recognition and reasonable settlement of her debts. Until that is done, the money market will be closed to her and trade confined

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to extended commercial credits already beyond the resources of most of our manufacturers. I am painfully familiar and profoundly bored with the parrot-like objections that no reliance can be placed upon Soviet promises, that they will be merely subterfuge, etc. etc. I will waste no words in answering them. I merely claim that I have studied the subject more patiently and thoroughly than those who make these assertions. No trader or banker can be produced who can show that during ten years or more the Soviet Government has not punctually met every pecuniary obligation it has contracted, or who doubts its intention to continue to do so. Those who have goods to sell, or whose business it is to provide finance, or to whom debts are due, are primarily concerned, and they at least have the right to investigate the position and form their own judgments upon such facts as they can elicit. British industry and finance have hitherto been able to take care of themselves without advice from politicians. It is not surprising therefore that, when a meeting of manufacturers interested in the Russian market was called at the Savoy Hotel (February 5), at which industries with a capital of £100 millions were represented, it was resolved:

That this meeting, representing various large industrial interests, is unanimously of opinion that the intimation from the Russian Government that they would welcome a delegation of British industry should command the attention of leaders of manufacturing and other interests in this country.

This meeting, therefore, resolves to take immediate action to constitute a representative delegation to proceed to Russia not later than March 8.

Since that meeting inquiries have poured in from every part of the country in such numbers that it is evident the departure of the delegation must be somewhat delayed in order to allow time for its adequate organization. It is open to all representative firms, the only limitation being that numbers should not make it unwieldy, and it has already been necessary to ask some industries to nominate one or two representatives of a group of firms. Probably no more comprehensive and representative delegation of British industry will ever

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have visited a foreign country with the opportunity of examining so wide a field for trade and enterprise. Its inquiries will be facilitated by the fact that they will all be addressed to the central government in whom the entire import and export trade is concentrated.

The members of the mission, while investigating the openings in which they are individually interested, will have at the same time the opportunity of discussing with the responsible authorities all relative questions of finance and credit and the national economic conditions upon which these must be based, including, of course, the old debts. Their report will either lead to substantial British participation in the economic development of Russia or prove that participation to be impossible. If I were not confident of the former result, I should not have devoted my time to it almost exclusively for many months, and in face of suspicion, scepticism and violent prejudice have obtained from the Soviet authorities an invitation to organize the mission. I have gratefully to acknowledge from the first staunch support and encouragement from a number of broadminded Conservatives to whom every detail of the negotiations has been known and whose names are a guarantee that only the interests of British industry, coupled with hardly less important political interests, have been in view. At an earlier date I might have been inclined to set out here the many (and, of course, debatable) considerations which have led me to hope for success. Now, however, that the departure of a powerful mission is assured, I prefer to leave it to be justified, or otherwise, by the result. The one positive statement which has been sedulously spread in political and financial circles as a reason for standing aloof from Russia is that the present regime is on the verge of collapse. There is not a vestige of evidence to support this belief. On the contrary, all my information points to the probability that it will last and that no alternative is in sight. Those who predict imminent collapse, fluent with reasons for doing nothing, give no hint of any positive policy whatever. I would ask under what precise conditions, and after how many more years, during which Germany, America, and other nations would certainly secure the bulk of the trade, these timorous

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obstructionists would approve of an attempt to re-establish working relations with Russia and safeguard British interests.

If, as I believe, the present form of government in Russia is likely to endure, it is clearly to our interest to recognize that fact as quickly as possible and to secure our full share in the expansion of Russian trade. In a few years the restoration of sound economic conditions is certain to make it vastly greater than ever before.

Fear and hatred of England amongst the peasant population of Russia have been fostered by the fantastic belief that we should again support White armies to restore the old regime and the land to its original proprietors. Not even the exiled landlords contemplate such a possibility. It has, however, been a potent instrument of mass propaganda in Russia. Whenever it flared, the flames have been fed by Mr. Churchill's bellicose references to "deep incisions of the surgeon's knife" or his dreams of a German conquest of Russia. The myth of hostile British intervention will be killed by British economic co-operation.

We have shown in the past no concern whatever about the form of internal government of any nation with which we traded. We are concerned only with security of payment for goods supplied or investments. If the volume of these is important, they will powerfully influence political relations. The policy of negation and recrimination has lasted too long. It can lead to nothing except greater animosity. It is time to try conciliation.

The More or Less Free State

By "Pat"

SINCE I last wrote about Ireland the Free State has recorded another fall in revenue. The Dublin papers proclaimed "a deficit of three millions" in spring, and seven months later "The total revenue since April 1 is £1,135,089 less than the expenditure." Worse than that, it is nearly a million less than for the corresponding seven months of last year, and there is no change in assessment to account for the fall. Worst of all, the derivation of the deficit shows decline in the means to live. The rising standard of expenditure exceeds the falling standard of production, at an increasing distance which can be covered only out of capital, and it follows that taxation is reducing the means to pay taxes. Where the seed is consumed instead of being sown, there can be no harvest.

Such were the figures early in winter, and now, on February 13, they are no better. The book-keeping in these monthly summaries is deceptive, lumping factors that ought to be stated separately, but the sources most indicative of solvency cannot be so confused. These are property and income tax, excise and estate duties. Between them they show a fall of no less than £987,000 for the ten months, and the fall is greatest in the first. It does not look bright for increased borrowing, and it seems the farce must continue until the tragedy.

In private business a winding-up order would naturally follow such balance-sheets, but "sovereignty" cannot well wind itself up, and nobody else dares try. The worst of lending to "sovereignty" is that the bailiff must always obey the borrower. The best the lender can do is to find a bigger fool than himself who will buy the debt from him and sell it to somebody still more silly. The Free State has not yet come to this, but the tendency is well established, and the rate of it is more rapid than the Free Staters know. The invention of the Free State has injured them enormously. I can imagine nothing that could do them more harm—unless a sovereign republic.

The Hindu cult of Sinn Fein has led them to this. In effect it means: Better perish in our own way than prosper in any other. Under this guidance they have

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chosen to exchange a higher civilization for a lower, revealing themselves to the world as unworthy of their own traditions. For an alien mess of parochial pottage they have abandoned the ancient birthright of their national dignity as "The King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland," and in place of their national peerage they have silent senators who must either hide their opinions or lose their pay.

Their choice has naturally damaged the collective status of the Free Staters, and now they must beg the help of British credit, which they had formerly by right, free of charge and on a larger scale than anywhere else in the Empire. Their preference for this unnatural isolation implies "a problem in character," and the solution must be slow in a region where "religion" is so dominant and Christianity so unpopular.

I deny the prosperity of the Free State. I deny it not the less because I desire it. Her prosperity is my necessity, but no State can prosper on self-deception and tripper flattery founded on official window-dressing. For most of the time I "live" in the Free State, where my savings are sunk, but the life she offers me is very poor, at least a hundred years behind my experience on the same means in other countries. The material sacrifice is not the hardest. Persecuting culture, she makes an intellectual wilderness. Her "education" aims at a social and political dominion of organized ignorance. They have a working school in Co. Leitrim where "the rain is coming in, the windows are boarded up, and the door has to be kept open to get light." Children are prosecuted for not attending, and the judge declines to compel them. The typical Free Stater denounces knowledge as a danger to society. All learn to read. Why? Nobody reads. To most of them, the best books are not worth their weight in farmyard dung.

"The King" is still in the Constitution, but the king's enemies control the services of the State. They are the recruits of rebellion and the pupils of the United Irish League, a criminal organization. By "freedom" they mean permission to impose a lower morality. The judges still denounce "the increasing prevalence of perjury," and while they denounce, it becomes more prevalent.

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Within the agrarian radius of a mile there are ten burglaries in a year, and "not a clue." He is still "an informer" who supports the law. Nobody trusts the police, and they cannot trust each other. Who could expect prosperity?

The fall in revenue is not explained by any reduction in rates of taxation. Increased rates yield reduced revenue. The criminal menace to industry reduces production, and this reduces the consumption of taxed commodities. "Over taxation," estimated under British rule at $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions a year for all Ireland, is now at least £15,000,000 for the Free State alone. They called British rule a "curse," and now, for a blessing, they multiply the curse by ten.

There is no advancing asset. Legislative "liberty" results in economic slavery. A town in Co. Cavan has a public-house to fourteen people, but the profit will not pay the licence duty. Whisky becomes unmarketable. There is a slump in the normal profits of mortal sin.

The funded debt is already seventeen millions, and several millions remain "floating," which must be funded. Another loan is announced—nearly eight millions. This year must wind up with a total something between twenty-six and thirty millions—if they can get it. The total under the Grattan Parliament in 1782 was only about £2,000,000. A part of the Irish nation borrows in seven years about fourteen times the total funded by the whole nation in five centuries, with Parliamentary Government all the time.

In the absence of any upward sign, the Minister of Finance begins to doubt his footing. He suggests that borrowing had better stop after this year. In that case, how meet the extending deficit? It has always been met by borrowing. Unless taxable capacity go up, expenditure must come down, but taxable capacity is falling still and must continue falling while crime can intimidate capital. American creditors have begun to send over nasty hints about "something to show for the money." Press messages confirm the warning. The last small subscription in Dublin took most of a week, and the notion of "a loan in London," so confident two years ago, appears to have been definitely dropped. I cannot recommend

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the credit of a State in whose public services I see open perjury organized for official promotion.

The Government began with a sort of right to go wrong, at least in theory. They had not been brought up to believe in the inferiority of "our people." To their minds, "British rule" accounted for all the ills. Any other explanation was treason, no matter how true. How could they expect decay as the fruit of "freedom"? That was the theory.

The practice has falsified it at every turn. The more "freedom," the more decay. The man who would risk his capital in the employment of Irish labour under British rule will not do so now, and this applies even more to the Nationalists than to the others. The bulk of the capital employing skilled labour in the Free State is controlled by the very small minority of Protestants. Industrial capital in Southern Ireland has always preferred the enterprises employing the smallest possible number in proportion to the value of the product. The larger the element of wages in cost of production, the smaller the chance of success, and this necessity is more imperative now than ever.

While I write this, here comes the new census revealing a fall of 32 per cent. in the number of Protestants. There is a fall in the Catholics also, but nothing like this. Truly, they have "turned the corner," but in the wrong direction. The Protestant bishops have been praising "the tolerance of our Catholic fellow-countrymen," and the Protestant Episcopal Church is the largest creditor of the Free State Government, but the Protestant laity clear out to escape the "tolerance." In two generations at this rate, Protestantism must have wholly vanished from "Holy Ireland," and nobody remains to resist the cult of crime as a social virtue.

The Government forget that a prospect of prosperity could not readily arise on a retrospect of crime, and that "our people," once out of Ireland, become a different people, forced up to the higher efficiency of the foreigner. At home, with no standard of comparison but their own, they refuse to improve on it. They rather persecute the man among them who tries. Sinn Fein (i.e. ourselves alone) forbids an exterior standard of efficiency, and no

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interior standard affords progress. They can risk a little on the security of the State, but not on industrial wages. They can praise the Government, but they cannot trust it. While 80 per cent. of them live by land, the land ceases to be bankers' security: where crime is virtue capital cannot live, and neither Parliament nor Government dares mention the "problem in character." The Free Staters must reform themselves before any other reform can be of much use to them. Failing that, they must decay and vanish. There was emigration even from Paradise, and it looks as if the most refractory of those early emigrants had settled in Southern Ireland.

"The lie of Free State prosperity" heads a list lately published in Dublin of "Industries closed down since 1921." By inference, it applies to the Free State only, and I think this must be wrong; but in any case, not much of it can apply to Ulster. She does not "close down." Her depressions are temporary, because her efficiencies are permanent. Even for all Ireland, the number would be startling—119; and it does not include all. It includes fourteen woollen mills, eleven flour mills, eight hosiery factories, six metal foundries, and so on. It does not include Mr. Ford, the greatest loss of all, but the Dublin papers report "daily shiploads" of the plant removing his motor works from Cork to Manchester. Having passed a resolution at Cork to confer the freedom of the city on Mr. Ford, they found opinions of his which they did not like, and then they rescinded their resolution. In Manchester they do his work, take his wages, and let him have any opinions he likes.

The attempt at Protection tells a like tale and points the same moral. On the whole, there is not the smallest sign of any result in increased production. Boots are commonly quoted as the one clear success, but imports have increased since the tariff was imposed. There is a slight increase in those employed, but a leader in the Senate estimates that "every man of them costs the country £400 a year in the increased prices." Drapery is still free, but garments made from it are taxed, and the shirt that costs 11s. in Connaught can be bought in the Strand for 6s. 6d., though the rent of the Strand shop is probably forty times as much.

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The system is entrusted to a Tariff Commission, who examine proposals, each on its separate merits, and advise the Government. Last summer the flour millers had their turn, and promised that they could increase their employment by 153, but an objector who employed 3,000 decided to remove his whole business out of Ireland if the duty were imposed. The Commissioners decided for the 3,000. A full third of the flour milling has stopped since the Free State started, "without any apparent prospect of re-starting at any time," and Mr. Sexton adds: "Those who are most competent to judge are convinced that the industry as a whole is foredoomed to paralysis and to extinction." This is the same Mr. Sexton who made a reputation by his speeches in the House of Commons on the finance of Mr. Gladstone's Irish legislation.

The woollen mills are now more than half idle. The excellent wool is exported, and Yorkshire "shoddy" is imported to clothe patriotism against the increasing cold of "our national freedom." These decaying industries had an established place and something of a tradition in the country. They prospered under the Penal Laws, and they die out under Catholic Emancipation. More than a hundred years ago Catholic employers of skilled labour were numerous and prosperous. Now they are very rare and incapable of rising to any advantage created for them by Protective tariffs.

Such is the outlook in the towns. Cork is by far the biggest town after Dublin, and of Cork the Government's own Commissioner says: "There never was a time when so many deserving people in the city were reduced to poverty by the closing of industries." There is not one town in the whole Free State, not even the capital, that could live by its own productive power. Their tradition is exchange, not production, and they never reflect that things must be produced before they can be bought or sold. Their men of business discuss "commerce" as if it had no relation to industrial production. Most of the towns produce practically nothing, and the more exclusively "commercial" they are, the more are they impoverished by the fallen purchasing power of agriculture. One of the biggest traders in Connaught tells me that he lives by his foreign investments, and that in so far as

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profit is concerned he might as well wind up his business at home.

The outlook for the agrarian majority of 80 per cent. is still worse. There are no official statistics to show how bad it is, but I am always in familiar touch with the peasant proprietors, and in raising crops to feed pigs they "have not twopence an hour for their working time." The young fellows and the girls naturally escape to a shilling an hour in other countries, where "freedom" cannot fetter them. The old fellows must remain and part with their twopence an hour to "put corner boys in motor-cars and call it national freedom." The best go. The worst remain for stock. The race decay. Through their Agriculture Department they pay to breed up beasts, and through their schools they pay still more to breed themselves down. Worst of all, this overwhelming mass of agrarians are not improvable. They are not psychologically accessible to ideas of progress. The Government may not touch them. Their devotions are determined by their ignorance, and their ignorance by their "education." They do not belong to our age. They belong to the fifteenth century, and if any Minister of the Government proposes a plan of any value to move them forward, they will certainly unseat him at the next election. The fate of the Free State is thus dictated by the electoral dominion of the unfittest.

I have known nothing like it since 1879, and in some respects it is much worse now. There is no "landlordism" to confiscate this time, and the new landowners cannot pay their purchase annuities, though these are not more than 50 per cent. of the former rent. The difference on an average farm in the congested west is not more than £3 to £4 a year. How could a working family get prosperity out of that? The increase in the cost of all they have to pay for, Government services included, is six times the total of all their gains by agitation and peasant proprietorship. These gains are not enough to balance the increase in cost of Government alone. The Government employ 40,000, largely criminals, each at more than twice his worth. The typical "farmer," who has to pay, is very ignorant of agriculture, and quite incapable of learning. Can he continue to pay?

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The leaders of "thought" are almost as helpless as the peasant masses. Take, for instance, Mr. P. Belton, chairman of the Dublin County Committee of Agriculture. He writes much on farming, and his mature conclusion is that "its death knell has been sounded." His own remedy is to grow wheat and to dismiss the Minister of Agriculture; but in the same letter he asserts that "the best wheat in this country is produced at a loss." A public resolution is now prepared for the dismissal of the unfortunate Minister because he cannot guarantee a profit by multiplying the loss on wheat. Such is the leading of "thought."

The latest long stride on the road to ruin is an agitation against "Tribute," the new name for the land purchase annuities. Unlike the vulgar voice of honest hardship in the Land League, it is led by educated men, and one of these proposes that the "question" of paying or refusing the annuities should be "submitted for the decision of the Church," which supersedes the "sovereignty" of the Parliament. The revolt has already been approved by a number of county councils. A leading member of the Government has resigned in order to support it. One of its leaders is Colonel Moore, once a British soldier and now an Irish agitator. Martyrs have begun going to jail for the cause. The Government has begun selling their farms for the arrears. The "movement" is extending. When a man is unable to pay his debts, it is easier to find his reasons for refusing.

These annuities originated in the Imperial Government borrowing from the public to pay out the Irish landlords and to provide a "bonus" of £12,000,000 in addition as a gift from the Imperial purse to make up the difference between what the tenants could pay for the land and what the landlords could accept for it. In addition, the State paid all cost of administration, which was very heavy. There were many Acts of Parliament, and under the Wyndham Act alone, in 1903, the Imperial provision was over £100,000,000, apart from the free gift of £12,000,000.

The total bill to "abolish landlordism" in Ireland was reckoned at £200,000,000, and the British taxpayer undertook the whole burden on British credit for Ireland's

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exclusive benefit. Not one shilling of the "Tribute" has ever gone into the Imperial Treasury. Instead of gaining anything by it, the British Government still continue to lose, still working their own end of the business, at their own expense, taking over the annuities collected (when they are) in Ireland and paying them out to those who lent the purchase money. It was England's price for her love of peace.

No Irish credit existed then, and none exists now, and probably none ever will, on which a scheme so vast could be attempted at any rate of interest. No conceivable resources within any meaning of either Home Rule or Separation could bear such a burden, or even half of it. The Irish tenant-purchaser owes his privilege entirely to "the British connection," and now he is instructed not only to denounce "the British connection" but also to repudiate the solemn unanimity of his consent to the contract. Such are the facts. I had better not discuss the morality. The Church has not decided yet, and she might decide against me.

Behind the facts another and a deeper motive runs all the way. What if England's ingenuous generosity should conquer Irish hate? The game would be up; the players could no longer prosper on the enmity of two peoples. It was a wonderful time in Ireland during those early years of the century, when Irish politicians went up and down like saints let loose defending the Ten Commandments. Tenants and landlords, republicans and royalists, traitors and loyalists, were all united in a benevolent conspiracy for their own ends at the expense of the British taxpayer and the Imperial credit. Wolves and lambs began lying down together. "Hereditary enemies" met to break the bread of brotherhood. Mr. William O'Brien announced "national reconciliation." Mr. T. P. O'Connor made American "copy" out of it. There was only one fly in the cream, but it was a big fly: agitation saw itself threatened with unemployment.

England was charmed with the outbreak of peace, but the wolves began to growl again, the lambs to bleat, and agitation reappeared in its Parliamentary frock-coat. "Hereditary enemies" denounced the millennium as "a landlord swindle," but not until they had safely

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swindled the British Treasury into financing it. The agrarian howl then resumed continues yet, and now takes the form of a "No Tribute Campaign."

The vested interests in Irish hate were deeply alarmed, and the Hindu cult demanded something more than frock-coat campaigning. "The holy cause of Ireland" must be defended from the danger of England's friendship, so much more dangerous than her "tyranny." Everything "Gaelic" became suddenly war-like. The Gaelic League became a school of German-Irish revolution, directed from inside the English Civil Service. Military training came under the name of "Celtic Philology" from Vienna. The primary schools took up the task. The teachers turned rebel to a man. Their clerical managers smiled. England's Chief Secretary looked on. On the death of Mr. Davitt, the *Morning Post* wrote of him as "the last of the great rebels," at a time when a hundred rebels, each greater than he, had worked up a military organization more formidable than anything since 1782.

On a summer evening in a Connaught village I was surprised at selections from classic opera beautifully played, still more surprised to find German university men among the street musicians. That was my first trace of the German war trail in Ireland; but the war broke out before I could get London editors to believe in the Irish preparations. To find people well informed on any alien scheme for "the destruction of the British Empire" I should always go to an Irish seminary rather than to the London Foreign Office.

Behind that deeper motive mentioned above runs the deepest motive of all: "Why must we perish at a double rate under our national freedom?" This terrible question is already discussed even among the remotest agrarians in the Free State, and, of course, it cannot but lead them to seek the causes of their ruin among themselves at home, where alone they can be found. To divert them from that inquiry, the cult of hate must be kept up; they must still be kept blaming "British rule," though not a trace of it remains with them—unfortunately for themselves. The "Tribute" is the latest of the very vicious fictions imposed on the peasant mass for

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this purpose, and the danger is that they may be cheated into another rebellion before their eyes can be opened.

Here is a sample of the stuff that is printed for them every week: "England to the average Irishman is a savage country where a people, grown fat on plunder, rule by murder." So much the worse for "the average Irishman" if he is so savage as to think it; but in justice to the intelligence of the writers I do not think they believe a word of what they write. The silent loyalty of the London newspapers affects to ignore this cult of hate founded on falsehood, but it is strong enough to return nearly 50 per cent. of the members to the Dublin Parliament, and each election leaves it stronger than the last. The propagandists themselves cannot provide government of any kind, but they can, and do, make good government by anybody else impossible, while adding enormously to the cost. For instance, they, and they alone, necessitate the existence of an army which, on the authority of a member of the Government, "has not, and is not intended to have, any military value." The statement is made in the Dublin Parliament and stands uncontradicted. The admitted policy of the official Opposition is not to administer the Constitution, but to pull it down. They are the only political party in civilization at present asking the people to put them in power for purposes of revolution, and the probabilities are that the people will return them, not because they believe in them, but because they cease to believe in the Government. "I do not see how we could be worse," is the usual feeling of the man who means to vote for Mr. de Valera next time, and he will have the right man to make him see it.

The history of the Free Staters for these seven years comes in substance to this: They assumed an Ireland that never existed and a community that never could exist in the conditions. They levied taxes and spent money on a scale to match their ignorant ambition, and now they see themselves wasting on false appearances what might have laid the foundation of true realities. Their taxable capacity is under £10,000,000, and they spend £30,000,000. They counted on an industrial growth of which the community have proved themselves

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quite incapable and the same applies to the civic standard, which reduces the best of the Constitution to waste paper. They expected legislation to supply the place of character, and now they find themselves making a political museum instead of a statute book. They counted on courage for judgment, but it does not follow that a man must be a first-rate statesman because he can shoot his best neighbour or rob a bank round the corner.

Against all the borrowing, their sole "reproductive" asset is the Shannon; but I do not see how, at best, it could reproduce a net shilling in the next twenty years. No demand exists for more than a small fraction of the electric power, and the rest remains a net loss unless labour can attract capital for industrial production. Motive power is only one of the essentials, and nearly all the others are missing. So long as the capitalist inside the Free State is so anxious to get out, the capitalist outside will not be anxious to get in. For like reasons the attempt at Protection must fail, pending a revolution in industrial character and habit. Any gain by Protective taxation presupposes a certain minimum of productive power at home, and experience so far has shown that the minimum does not exist. For successful Protection, there must be something to protect, and this depends on industrial character even more than on capital. It is one thing to produce motive power at the expense of the State; it is another thing to find labour worth its wage.

Will all this be called "an attack on the Free State Government"? Well, I think they are less to blame than anybody else in the Free State. I do not see where the Free State could find an equal number of men on whom she could rely to do less mischief in seven years. The one serious fault I have to find in them is that they lack the moral courage to admit the impossibility of their position. The country goes down, and they dare not tell why, for if they did they would be turned out to make room for men more dangerous.

The invention of the Free State has certainly set Irish Nationalists shooting each other, without costing England even the price of the gunpowder. Can this be called a "settlement"? It has been called a joke, but it is a tragedy.

China's Road to Ruin

By J. O. P. Bland

THREE years ago, discussing under "Current Comments" the proceedings of the Tariff Conference at Peking, the Editor of THE ENGLISH REVIEW wrote as follows :—

In return for tariff autonomy the Chinese have agreed to abolish in three years' time the provincial taxation on inland trade known as *lekin*, an undertaking which, as everyone knows full well the Peking Government has not the power, even if it had the will, to perform. The discussion of this *lekin* question has reflected from the outset the fantastic idealism and unreality with which the whole proceedings of the Conference are permeated, for it is evident that when China obtains complete tariff autonomy, in 1928, she will be free to impose such duties as she pleases on every branch and staple of foreign trade; in other words, *lekin*, under a dozen new names, will be limited only by the rapacity of the official and the capacity of the merchant.

A year later, analysing the position and objectives of the Kuomintang, he wrote :—

They talk impressively of racial equality, sovereign rights, and the aspirations of the people, but the immediate and obvious purpose of the men behind the Nationalist movement is to secure control of the Imperial Maritime Customs revenues and of the hoarded wealth of the Treaty Ports, the only spots left unlooted in the land.

Finally, in February 1927, criticizing the then (and still) fashionable and officially-imposed belief in the patriotic aspirations of the Kuomintang and its capacity to unite all China under a stable and effective government, he observed :—

The truth of the matter is, that there is absolutely nothing to distinguish the leaders of the Kuomintang from the other bandit-rulers and political adventurers who are ruining China, except their superior political organization and the support which they are receiving, for sinister ends, from the Communists of Moscow. Of patriotic ideals, consciously and unselfishly pursued towards definite ends of national security and progress, of any genuine determination to help China to win her rightful place in the comity of nations, as Japan has done, by discipline, efficiency, and honest administrative reforms, there has never been, and there is not, any sign. The

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assumption that these patriotic ideals are the driving force behind the Cantonese Nationalist movement is therefore wholly fallacious, and the edifice of optimism based upon this assumption is a house built upon sands of delusion.

I make no apology for these quotations because, now that the edifice of optimism is evidently tottering, THE ENGLISH REVIEW is entitled to credit for its intelligent appreciation of the facts of the Chinese situation, and its persistence in presenting them. For three years it has had the courage of its convictions in almost isolated opposition to the facile optimism of the "F.O. school of thought" and to a very general acquiescence of public opinion, as represented by Parliament and Press, in the policy of patient conciliation adopted towards China by the Powers, at and since the Washington Conference. The inevitable consequences of persistence in that policy, repeatedly predicted by THE ENGLISH REVIEW, are rapidly bringing the situation in China to the final stage in which the Powers will be compelled to choose between reconsideration of their sentimental policy and the complete surrender of their prestige and commercial interests in the Far East.

It is interesting, though painful, at this juncture to remember that, eighteen months ago, despite several instructive object-lessons, public opinion in this country was still disposed to accept without demur Sir Austen Chamberlain's myopic view of the situation. It cheerfully accepted, for example, his explanation of the British Government's moderation in dealing with the Nanking outrages, namely, its desire "not to embarrass the Nationalist Government in their task of introducing order into the territory under their control." Similarly, it concurred, without audible dissent, in his pious hope that "our friendly policy will presently evoke an equally friendly response from a Chinese Government freed from foreign domination and thus enabled to devote itself to the single-minded service of the Chinese." The nation at large was, in fact, led to believe that the political activities of the Cantonese section of the Kuomintang represented a genuine national and patriotic movement, entitled to our sympathy and support, even at the cost of considerable sacrifices of legitimate British interests.

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Sir Frederick Whyte, one of the most active exponents of the "F.O. school of thought," and an ardent advocate of a conciliatory *rapprochement* with the Southern Nationalist leaders, discerned in the Kuomintang's armies and officials "a cause greater than themselves, which is the hope, the only hope now visible, for the future of China." To him, the Chinese Republican flag was "a symbol not merely of political change, but of a far-reaching evolution in economics, in customs, in ethics, and in thought." Since those words were written (in the *Times*) much innocent blood has flowed under the bridges of China, many humble lives have been sacrificed to the "cause greater than themselves" of the Kuomintang politicians; but he must be a bold man who would now venture to assert that the present condition of affairs indicates any salutary change in the political instincts, economics, ethics, or thought of the men in power. On the contrary, everything that has happened during the past two years vindicates the opinions quoted at the beginning of this article. There is, at all events, no longer any concealment or possible denial of the fact that the immediate and paramount purpose of the men who direct the Kuomintang is to secure control of the Imperial Customs revenues and the wealth of the Treaty Ports. Nor is there any denying that, thanks to our purblind persistence in the policy of patient conciliation, they are approaching the attainment of that objective. As the result of their deliberate violation of agreements touching the administration and integrity of the Customs Service, and in view of the humiliating conditions recently attached to the appointment of the Inspector-General by the Kuomintang, the end of the Service, as an efficient administration, is clearly in sight. Its inevitable demoralization will entail the final collapse of China's credit abroad and repudiation of her obligations. It must also entail the gradual elimination of the last authoritative protection of the trader against the rapacity of the official, and with it a general dislocation of the machinery of international trade at the Treaty Ports.

After the Customs, the Foreign Settlements. By skilfully exploiting the *laissez-faire* sympathy of the Treaty Powers, and by persistent undermining of the

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foreign-controlled administration of the Shanghai Municipality, the leaders of the Kuomintang have reached a point at which they may fairly hope to enter before long into possession of these lands of promise and their opulent revenues. The first-class brains of the Right wing of the party have been too wise in their generation to adopt the forceful policy advocated at the fifth plenary session by the extremists of the Left, who demanded the wholesale and immediate abrogation of the "unequal Treaties" and the unconditional rendition of all Foreign Settlements and Concessions. There are more ways of killing a cat than by skinning it; an insidious process of encroachments upon the prerogatives of the Municipal Council will enable them to attain their desired ends with less risk than they would run by ordering a violent assault upon the foreigners' extra-territorial rights and personal property. Hence the ostensibly plausible demand for five Chinese representatives on the Council; hence also the attempts, in direct violation of a recent agreement, to undermine the security of jurisdiction at Shanghai by reducing the Provisional Court to the position of a Court of first instance, whose decisions would be open to revision or veto by the District or Provincial Courts. In these manœuvres the Nanking Government is obviously relying upon continuance of the foreign Powers' sympathetic consideration for China's sovereign rights. Were there any ground for believing in the possibility of a Chinese administration replacing that of the Landrenters' Municipality with anything like its equivalent in efficiency and integrity, there might be something to be said for them. But the actual condition of every city in China, Nanking included, proclaims the lamentable truth that, given control of the police and of the administration of justice, nothing can protect the wealth of the settlement, native and foreign, from the rapacity of hordes of officials and placemen, who would treat it as locusts treat a field of corn. As matters now stand, a few more conciliatory gestures on our part, a few more skilful *coups-de-main* by the astute politicians of Nanking, and the duties of the Shanghai Defence Force will shortly be confined to protecting the persons of British subjects; for their business and their property, at the mercy of

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Nanking's tax-gatherers and Yamen-runners, will fade away, like snow upon the desert. To arm-chair idealists at a distance, this may sound a hard saying; nevertheless, it is incontestably true. The fact which stands out most conspicuously from the record of the Nanking group of politicians since their advent to power is that politics in China begin and end with money. It was so, no doubt, under the old regime; but the get-rich-quick voracity of the Kuomintang's military chieftains and civilian officials exceeds anything that the long-suffering Chinese people have ever known. To such lengths, indeed, has the squeezing process been carried that the plunderable assets of the country have been visibly reduced, and the attention of the plundering elements is therefore directed, with ever-increasing intensity, to those rich revenues which have so far been preserved for national purposes by virtue of the foreigner's obstinate insistence on the inviolability of agreements. That barrier is now in process of being overcome.

The paramount factor in Chinese politics is, I repeat, money. Next to it, at a considerable distance, comes the racial pride and ancestral instinct of exclusiveness, which find their expression, as they have always done, in fear and dislike of the foreigner. The predominant importance of these two factors has been clearly manifested throughout the whole record of the Kuomintang. Is this statement too sweeping? For the benefit of those who have no direct knowledge of things Chinese, and whose opinions may therefore unconsciously reflect some of the false sentimentality with which the subject has latterly been invested by propagandists and political "highbrows," it may be well to support it by a brief analysis of the recent record of the Kuomintang, comparing its professions with its performances, its claims with its reputation. We may also profitably consider to what extent the Nanking Government has justified Sir Austen Chamberlain's hopes as regards "devoting itself to the single-minded service of the Chinese" and "introducing order into the territory under its control."

Be it observed, *imprimis*, that the Nanking Government's claim, insistently advanced by its emissaries abroad, to be the effective Government of a united China,

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can now be shown to be pure fiction, disseminated solely with a view to securing recognition by the Powers and thus preparing the ground for the abrogation of the "unequal Treaties." As a matter of easily verifiable fact, there is less unity in China today than there was when the Republic was first proclaimed, except when it comes to joint action for the expropriation and expulsion of the foreigner; at the present moment, Nanking's nominal authority extends at most over five out of the eighteen provinces, and two out of eight railways. Its chief claim to credit in the eyes of the four other political factions, whose leaders collect revenues on their own account in the regions under their control, consists in having skillfully exploited the benevolent attitude imposed upon the signatory Powers of the Washington agreements, and successfully followed up each conciliatory concession by more and more extravagant demands, until at the moment of writing it has manœuvred the diplomatic body into a *sauf-qui-peut* like unto that of the Gadarene herd. But Nanking's eloquent appeals to the other political factions to recognize its centralized authority, in matters of domestic politics and national finance, have invariably fallen upon deaf ears, for the simple reason that neither the *personnel* of its Government nor its methods of governing are of a character to inspire confidence. The "Christian" General, for example, while professing the Nationalist faith, has greatly increased his own popularity of late by denouncing the luxury and extravagance of the members of the Central Executive Committee at Nanking and their callous indifference to the sufferings of the people. He has publicly expressed his opinion that the Government's financial difficulties are chiefly due to its "haphazard methods of treating receipts and disbursements," and to the notorious fact that "those who handle public funds become rich, while hordes of unscrupulous persons curry favour with these officials in order to share in the spoils." Hu Han-ming, who visited London last summer as a travelling delegate of the Kuomintang, has recently been at pains to explain this unfortunate state of affairs as due to the fact that "squeezing is in the blood of China's official class, and beyond hope of eradication. The only remedy for it,"

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he declares, "lies in educating the masses to a sense of their rights, which the officials will always ignore if they can." The prospect of any early application of this remedy is not likely to disturb Mr. Hu's colleagues, especially as the direction of national education is in their hands (of which more anon).

Judging by the outspoken utterances of the Chinese Press at the Treaty Ports, the inner clique of the Kuomintang at Nanking, consisting largely of relatives and henchmen of the late Sun Yat-sen, is riding for a fall, and for this Feng Yu-siang is preparing, by building up a reputation as friend and protector of the common people. It was he who recently intervened on behalf of the 20,000 householders at Nanking, compulsorily dispossessed of their houses with nominal compensation, for the making of the new roads leading to Sun Yat-sen's mausoleum and to Chiang Kai-shek's private residence. He it was who first voiced popular resentment against the decision of the Central Executive Committee to entrench itself in office and authority by asserting its right to appoint 50 per cent. of the membership of the next Congress of the party. In the administration of his own four provinces, the "Christian" General, despite certain indelible blots on his escutcheon, appears to be in a fair way to rival the Model Tuchun of Shansi by preserving law and order, making roads, improving education, and generally promoting the welfare of the people. It is only in the matter of China's international relations that he speaks with the same voice as Nanking, professing to believe that the cause of China's manifold afflictions lies in the "economic domination of the foreign Powers." Whatever may be his real convictions in this matter, he could scarcely express any other opinion without endangering his popularity, for, as a special correspondent of the *Times* in Central China recently explained, "there is a widespread idea in the minds of both officers and privates, that the revision of the Treaties will mean that all foreign property will immediately revert to the Chinese people," a prospect so alluring that no patriotic politician can afford to destroy it. There is no possible doubt that the uncontradicted prevalence of this idea, coupled with the unexpected readiness to submit to spoliation, displayed

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(under orders) by the foreign communities at Hankow and elsewhere, accounts for much of the eagerness displayed by the politicians of every faction to make a speedy end of the foreigner's Treaties and extra-territorial rights.

So attractive are the prospects of successful agitation to this end and so infectious is the eagerness to attain them that even the saner and soberer elements in the Nationalist Party, including its most enlightened representatives abroad, dare not oppose a movement so promising in spoils and at the same time so gratifying to the national amour-propre. Hence the tacit support given by men who in their hearts know better to many of the fantastic arguments advanced in support of the extremists' claim for the immediate abrogation of the "unequal Treaties." Hence the failure of the merchant class, gentry, and retired officials to disavow (although they deprecate) the strikes, boycotts, and other methods of intimidation wherewith these arguments are reinforced. They remain silent, whilst the propagandists and orators of Nanking continue to denounce the unequal Treaties as the cause of all the ills that afflict China. Let these Treaties be abolished, they say, and forthwith the body public will be healed of all its sickness. The opium traffic, that flourishing and lucrative monopoly of the military section of the party, will forthwith be abolished; the national finances will flourish, soldiers cease from looting, and bandits turn again to ways of peace. With incredible audacity their spokesmen (inspired, no doubt, to some extent by the characteristically mischievous utterances of M. Albert Thomas at Shanghai) have lately attributed "the hardships of Chinese labourers to the oppression caused by the unequal Treaties."

The generally complaisant attitude adopted by the representatives of the various Powers, with whom the Foreign Minister at Nanking has recently concluded new Treaties, evidently inspires the leaders of the Nationalists with the hope that their goal is now in sight, provided only that public opinion in the United States and Great Britain continues to sympathize with their claims, and that the other Powers are willing, under American leadership, to pursue the road to ruin to its bitter end. But if

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this hope should be threatened, or deferred, by some new phase in the negotiations, it is safe to predict that strikes, boycotts, and mob violence will speedily become once more the order of the day. This must inevitably happen unless the Powers, taking a leaf out of Japan's Manchurian book, unite to warn Nanking that any overt acts of hostility or illegality will entail serious consequences.

Let us now consider the nature and results of the "friendly response" which the Nationalists have made to Sir Austen Chamberlain's friendly policy, and to what extent they have justified his faith in their ability to introduce order into the territory under their control. Space does not permit of any detailed survey of the situation; a few observations, under each heading, must suffice.

When, as the result of the Chen-O'Malley agreement, the Nationalists secured possession of the British Concession at Hankow, they had an unprecedented opportunity to vindicate themselves as harbingers of the long-promised New Era, able and ready to give China the stable and effective government envisaged by the Washington agreements; an opportunity, in fact, to justify their insistent claim to "equality and mutual respect." After four successive Chinese directors had brought the surrendered Concession to bankruptcy and despair, an honest and capable official (Dr. Chang) was appointed to the post at the end of 1927, who succeeded in restoring order and confidence. For the sole reason that, by so doing, he gained the esteem of the foreign community, he has now been superseded, after one year's work, and fiercely denounced in the Chinese Press as "a running dog of the Imperialists." Furthermore, in a dispatch dated January 22, the Shanghai correspondent of the *Times* describes the high-handed manner in which Hupeh provincial authorities have violated the pledges given to Sir Miles Lampson by the Foreign Minister at Nanking, concerning the status of the surrendered Concessions; he refers also to the financial motives underlying their action, "which directly conflicts with the Nanking Government's claim to be a national Government."

Similarly, under the agreement by virtue of which the Chinese obtained the rendition of the Mixed Court and

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the establishment of the new Provisional Court at Shanghai, they were placed in a position to prove the sincerity of their professed intention to conform to Western standards of judicial procedure and to administer clean-handed justice. The manner in which they have availed themselves of this opportunity is sufficiently indicated by the unsavoury record of the Provisional Court for the past three years. The actual position of affairs may be gathered from the following extract from a recent leader (December 1) in the *North China Daily News*, a journal which cannot be accused of any lack of sympathy for the Nationalist cause :—

The new order of the Kiangsu provincial Government violates the Rendition agreement at half-a-dozen points. In itself it constitutes a direct blow at the foundations of foreign jurisdiction in Shanghai. . . . But it is the future which calls for earnest consideration. Conditions at the Provisional Court are becoming more and more intolerable. . . . The only practical step is to take over the Court again, as it was taken over in 1911. Experience proves only too clearly that, in the present state of politics, Chinese administration is impossible.

In no instance has Great Britain's "friendly policy" been more plainly manifested than in its readiness to recognize China's sovereign rights in the matter of tariff autonomy, and in no instance has the Nationalist Government's failure to keep its specific pledges been so cynical and complete. Not only is the abolition of *lekin* (which British traders were led to expect as proof of the Nationalists' good faith and administrative ability) once more deferred *sine die*, but as regards local taxation on goods in transit inland, both imports and exports, every province has now become a law unto itself. In Kiangsi, for example (which Nanking claims to govern), the provincial levies on trade, under eight headings, amount to about 40 per cent. *ad valorem*. In certain places, where *lekin* stations have been abolished, the men who had paid to "farm" the tax are the immediate sufferers, but the trader obtains no relief, for a new Consumption Tax mulcts him more heavily than before. In Honan, a famine-relief tax was imposed last year, in addition to five other levies, but there is no record of any of the proceeds being devoted to mitigation of the sufferings of the famine districts. The net result of tariff autonomy has been to increase the direct revenues, derived by the

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high authorities from the landing and shipping of goods at the Treaty Ports, but it has done nothing to limit—indeed, it appears to have stimulated—the insatiable voracity of the hordes of officials inland, who regard the merchant and the tradesman as their lawful prey, and whose one idea is to feather their nests, as rapidly as possible and by all possible means. Honestly administered, the revenues of the country would suffice to meet the immediate needs of its administration and to discharge its obligations, but with speculation rampant in every department of the public service, the prospect of solvency and stability becomes more and more remote.

Finally, as regards the hope of a “friendly response” from the Kuomintang in the near future, the real feelings and motives which animate its leaders may fairly be gauged from the character of the primer issued last year by the Nationalist Government for compulsory use in schools throughout Northern and Central China—a textbook deliberately intended to teach the young idea to hate and despise all foreigners and to put upon them the blame for the misery and destruction inflicted upon the country by the misrule of its predatory politicians. Another significant manifestation of the “friendly response” has been given by the “Christian” General’s announcement of his hope and intention to put an end to all foreign trade within his territories. Of these things, and of the pitiful condition to which the Chinese peasantry and merchant class have been reduced, the “F.O. school of thought” apparently reckons not; they might disturb its faith in the efficacy of conciliatory gestures. Yet the realities of the situation are patent enough to those who face them. They were summed up the other day, in one illuminating phrase, by an old countryman, describing to a missionary the reign of terror in his district. “A man with two bowls of rice,” he said, “is in danger.”

The truth of the whole matter is that, as regards judicial procedure, political economy, administration, and fiscal policy, the mentality and morality of China’s rulers today are on a par with those of the Middle Ages in Europe. The sooner Downing Street recognizes this simple fact, the better for us and for the Chinese people.

Some Problems for Pacifists

By W. G. Carlton Hall

IT has been said that the average Englishman distrusts logic; probably because he so often finds that an apparently correct logical argument lands him in a conclusion which is obviously absurd or impossible. But the fault is not really in logic, which if rightly used cannot fail; the fault lies in the omission to go back and inquire whether the premises on which the argument has been founded are true or false. We have lately, in various quarters, been treated to ingenious discussions concerning the implications of the idea which is conveniently, if not very accurately, expressed by the phrase the "outlawry of war," and consequently of the "Kellogg Pact," which purports to give effect to that idea. So far as they are usually carried by advocates of the Pact, they lead to conclusions which to most people are highly attractive, as savouring of the millennium; if, however, pursued farther, they will lead to dilemmas of so serious a character as to throw doubt on the fundamental assumptions on which they rest. We are told that if the Pact means anything, it means that between nations, as between individuals in a civilized State, the use of force is forbidden except so far as may be necessary for immediate defence against an actual attack. This is beyond dispute, *if the Pact means anything*; but it seems to presuppose the major premise that "every treaty means something." If so, the major premise is false; a glaring instance to the contrary is furnished by the Treaty of Paris of May 11, 1867, by which seven Powers guaranteed the perpetual neutrality of Luxembourg; but in such terms that in no possible circumstances could they be called upon to make their guarantee good. Even if the major premise is modified into a statement that this particular treaty must mean something, we at once find some evidence to the contrary. Every lawyer knows that there is hardly anything less likely to accomplish any useful purpose, or more likely to produce misunderstandings and quarrels, than a formal contract qualified by informal agreements; which is precisely what the Pact is. Formally, the right to make war is renounced; informally, it seems to be agreed that this shall not bind (a) the

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United States in any matter touching the Monroe Doctrine; (b) France in any matter touching treaty obligations; (c) Great Britain in any matter touching treaty obligations or the special needs of the British Empire; or (d) any nation when acting in self-defence. If this last reservation is to be interpreted according to certain American utterances, to the effect that each nation must be the sole judge of what constitutes self-defence, or the occasion for it, in its own case, the renunciation of war becomes a nullity. No nation in modern times has ever admittedly gone to war except in self-defence; even Germany, when in 1914 she embarked on a war of conquest for which first Prussia and afterwards the German Empire had been deliberately preparing for more than a century (to wit, since the Convention of Paris of 1808), was able to put a plea of self-defence plausible enough to deceive all those who wish to be deceived.

But there are those who think the first three reservations, important though they may be, do not of themselves stultify the Pact, and that the right of self-defence for nations need mean no more than it does for individuals. They say: "If a burglar enters your house, you have the right to throw him out, if necessary with violence; but you have no right to go and loot *his* house to compensate yourself for any damage he may have done you. Similarly, if one nation attacks another, the nation attacked has the right to beat off the attacking force, but not to carry the war farther; whatever the dispute may be that has led to the attack, both parties must submit it to the decision of some tribunal, which will pay no regard to the results of the fighting, except in so far as they may entitle the party attacked to compensation." So stated, the matter looks simple. But difficulties soon present themselves. First, what is the tribunal to which the disputants are to be bound to refer? True, there are already in existence the League of Nations and the Permanent Court of International Justice; but the jurisdiction of these two institutions has not been accepted by either the United States or the Soviet Republics, and does not seem likely to have any effective control in the lifetime of the present generation. Next, if we can get over the tribunal obstacle by assuming the existence, in the future, of something which we may call a "World

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State," and whose authority every nation will be willing to recognize in theory, how is that World State to impose its will on a powerful disputant who declines to comply with its award? Article 16 of the League Covenant is a rather desperate attempt to solve this problem; its patent defects have led to a series of fruitless endeavours to remove them.

Still, for the sake of argument, let us assume that the World State is a possibility, and that when formed it will have the power to enforce its decrees in any ordinary case; and the Pact (again, *if it means anything*) cannot mean less than this. Other consequences will follow, to which little if any attention has so far been paid. First of all, there is the disappearance of that fundamental principle of international law which has been called *legitimitio per subsequens bellum*; the rule that, whatever the merits of a dispute, the moment war is declared, both parties become equal in the eyes of the law, and entitled, within certain not very definite limits, to damage each other to the best of their ability. Further, they have the right to insist upon the absolute neutrality of all other nations, and even to put those other nations to a considerable measure of loss and inconvenience by the exercise of what are called "belligerent rights"; and when either belligerent has had enough of it, the other is entitled to squeeze the best terms of peace out of him that he can, without outside interference. But if no nation can lawfully be a belligerent, then no nation can lawfully have belligerent rights; and the duty of third parties will be not, as now, to avoid interference with the combatants, while showing preference to neither, but to put every obstacle they can in the way of both, especially the aggressor, as soon as the World State shall have decided which that is.

This decision is never easy, as the League of Nations has already discovered; but what is not generally realized is the simple fact that in almost every case the actual aggressor is the "under dog." The top dog, unless he feels his position is becoming hazardous, has no inducement to interfere with the *status quo*. Thus the maintenance of peace really means the maintenance of the top dog in a position so secure that neither he, in order to improve it, nor the under dog, seeing a good chance of

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upsetting it, may be tempted to acts of violence. Nevertheless, such are the freaks of psychology, the pacifist is usually also a humanitarian, to whom championship of the weaker or the rebel is a religion. The humanitarian point of view is impressed on us from our earliest days as divinely inspired. As we are taught history at school, the rebel is always a hero, and the ruler he slays is always a wicked tyrant. A "political motive" is almost universally accepted as an excuse for any crime, and ordinarily is even a bar to extradition. And in extreme cases, where the under dog (being a rebel and not a sovereign State) carries his violence to a point at which success seems possible, he is "recognized as a belligerent"; on which other nations proclaim their neutrality, and protest if the rebel is afterwards treated as a criminal. How does the "outlawry of war" affect this point? It will be noted that, in practice, recognition as a belligerent is never given on any ground of real or pretended justice, but solely on the ground that the rebel has shown himself strong enough to fight his enemy on roughly equal terms; which is irreconcilable with the proposition that no end may be attained by force. To be in any way consistent, the Pact advocates must be prepared to allow every Government in the world to suppress armed insurrection by every means in its power, and even to give it active help when required; the grievances of the rebels being inquired into only after they have laid down their arms. Unless the advocates of the Pact will accept this proposition—thereby reversing the traditional pacifist and humanitarian attitude towards, e.g. India, Cuba, Ireland, China (before the fall of the Empire), and Russia (before the Bolshevik regime)—they must admit that any nation which, in the future, defies the authority of the World State, will rank as an "oppressed people rightly struggling to be free" (or "seeking self-determination," if a more modern phrase is preferred), and so deserve the sympathy and active help of every right-thinking person.

Unless the pacifists can somehow get out of this dilemma, we shall be forced to believe that the assumption that the Kellogg Pact must mean something leads to an impossible conclusion; and that, in fact, it means nothing.

Germany, Poland and the Minorities

By J. H. Harley

THE March meeting of the Council of the League of Nations promises not to be devoid of events. Dr. Stresemann had taken great umbrage at a speech of the Polish Foreign Secretary on the activities of a German propaganda association in Polish Upper Silesia, and had declared that at this coming meeting he would raise the whole question of the racial minorities in Europe and the League's duties to the same. Senator Dandurand, of Canada, also notified the Secretariat that he would raise the more limited and certainly more practical question of the League's procedure in regard to minority petitions. What a number of intriguing and dangerous questions might be ventilated in a few days if Dr. Stresemann permits himself to indulge to the full extent permitted by his notice of motion! Even the imminent approach of our own general election could not prevent the British newspapers from devoting space to some of the more startling issues. Dr. Stresemann will certainly not have the honours all to himself. He made much of German grievances in Upper Silesia, and the Polish Chargé d'Affaires has just intimated that if the German sticks to his guns, the Polish Government intend to raise the question of Polish grievances in the German Reich.

Already, however, it is getting to be pretty apparent that at the Council meeting the German Foreign Secretary will not really extend his notice of motion over the whole range of Europe. Those who live in glass houses, as the old proverb has it, are wise to be sparing of their stones. Some of Dr. Stresemann's candid friends have spoken as if, among the subjects of his survey, he would include the treatment of Germans in South Tyrol. But it is probable that he will not really be so bold as this. The subject that led him to his extraordinary explosion of annoyance and rage before the December meeting of the Council was very much more limited. It was the alleged treatment of German minorities, so far as the quota of their particular schools was concerned, under the Geneva Convention

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of 1922. That will still, no doubt, form the main burden of his complaint, but that the German Government have thoughts of some more serious contest is shown by the hasty way in which within the last four weeks a Decree on Polish Minority Schools has been published by the Prussian Government,* in which the practice of that Government has been made to seem rather more respectable than it appeared to be of old.

This Geneva Convention itself is an extraordinary document to those who remember the scenes in the House of Commons during the passage of Lord Balfour's Education Act of 1902, and of the attitude of the Liberal stalwarts to the whole question of minority education in the bright particular Parliament of 1906. In Polish and German Upper Silesia there is no question of barring the provision of sectarian religious education at the public expense by the operation of the once famous Cowper-Temple clause. The representatives of forty children of that German minority whose woes Dr. Stresemann, and many of his Liberal sympathizers in this country, strongly bewail, can demand, in any district, a school where instruction can be given in their own particular tenets, or their own characteristic tongue. Eighteen pupils of a minority race in a majority State school can ask for a special class to be conducted in their own special language. Twelve German Protestant infants can demand through their parents or guardians that facilities should be given them for instruction in their own definite creed. And, be it remembered, no reservation has here been made, for the benefit of the passive resister, forbidding the provision of such moneys from the public funds. Indeed, it is expressly laid down, in this German-Polish Convention, that no minority, either of race or language, can be penalized or treated unequally in appropriations from the State Exchequer.

The Prussian State Decree on education which, as already mentioned, has been published within the last few weeks, hardly goes so far as this. The officials of our advanced modern Prussia are content to see one law

* The Decree was published on January 23 last in the *Ministerialblatt für die Preussische innere Verwaltung*. The figures as to Polish school children in German plebiscite Silesia are taken from Dr. Junosza, "L'enseignement Polonais en Allemagne."

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for the rest of their realm and another law in operation throughout German Upper Silesia. But although it does not go so far as the Geneva Convention, the Prussian State Decree still goes far enough to cause great tribulation of spirit to Mr. Lloyd George and his friends of 1902, whose conscience would not permit them to make any real educational concessions to a protesting religious minority. Religious minorities do not, indeed, according to this decree, have their school buildings provided for them at the public expense. But they are kindly permitted to float companies for the provision of such buildings at their own private expense, and the Prussian State promises not to be too curious as to the sufficiency of their financial backing for carrying on the school until the number of head teachers amounts to more than 5 per cent. of the numbers of their floated company. When the number of school children in the minority school of a particular district, however, exceeds a certain figure, a subsidy amounting to 60 per cent. of the total expenditure on teachers shall be paid to them from the funds of the State. With almost Scotch penuriousness, it is further provided that, if the State has to furnish a class-room for minority teaching, the estimated rent of such class-room must be deducted from the 60 per cent. subsidy. If, for three years, the Polish minority school pursues the even tenor of its way to the satisfaction of the Prussian State authorities, then it may really be turned into a public elementary school with Polish as the language of tuition.

It will thus be seen that the German Government has bound itself by minority provisions in the plebiscite district of Upper Silesia which it is unable, in its most recent decree, to grant to the rest of the Prussian State. And it is not seriously claimed, even by Dr. Stresemann, that in their own particular part of Upper Silesia the Polish Government has ever questioned any of the leading clauses of the Geneva Convention. Indeed, it was shown by M. Zaleski at the December meeting of the Council that, for a German population of about 200,000 in Upper Silesia, there are ninety elementary minority schools in which no fewer than 20,500 children are taught in German. On the other hand, out of a large Polish population in German plebiscite Silesia, and with 79,395

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Polish infants of school age, only 506 are given instruction in Polish, and only 376 receive religious instruction in the tenets of their creed. What then has Dr. Stresemann got to grumble about? What was there to occasion his grandiloquent notice for the Council meeting in March?

The answers to these questions will reveal the true inwardness of the present situation. They raise, in fact, the whole question of minorities in Europe wherever there are minorities, and the relation of the League of Nations to them. It will be remembered that the League of Nations comes to deal with this problem because in 1919-20 the Paris Peace Conference drew up a series of Minority Treaties between the five principal Allied and Associated Powers on the one hand, and Poland, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, Rumania, Greece, Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Turkey on the other. For the present subject the most interesting article of these treaties is Article 9, which, in the Polish treaty, prescribes "that in towns and districts where there is a considerable proportion of Polish nationals belonging to racial, religious or linguistic minorities, these minorities shall be assured an equitable share in the enjoyment and application of the sums which may be provided out of public funds, and of the State, municipal, or other budget for educational, religious or charitable purposes." The guarantee of these treaties is placed in the hands of the League of Nations. And through the subsequent instrumentality of the League itself, this principle of the protection of their minorities has been extended to other States. Lithuania, for example, signed a declaration almost identical with that of Poland, but the League was not quite so successful with Estonia and Latvia.

Now, there were certain obvious dangers in this procedure, and it is only if we face them that we can understand the situation as it has suddenly emerged today. For one thing it was rather invidious to pick out certain States with racial or religious minorities and leave all the others severely alone. This inevitably suggested, and it could hardly be otherwise, that those States which were the subject of special treaties were understood to be inclined to treat their minorities with less than justice or even with actual persecution. Why, out of the defeated States, should Austria be bound by a special

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minority treaty, and Germany, which had a much more sinister record in the past, be relieved, except in Upper Silesia, from any of the implications which resulted from the model clauses? This, at any rate, is a question which will be sure to be asked when Dr. Stresemann puts forward his notice of motion before the Council of the League. And there is another unfortunate consequence of the past history of this question of the minorities which is at any rate of equal importance. Certain States have been singled out for the application of certain precautionary clauses in the treatment of their minorities. A consequent atmosphere of suspicion thereafter hangs round these particular States, and it becomes easier to take the pretext of a concern for the rights of their minorities to work up an agitation for really political purposes.

It is only fair, however, at this stage to remark that the League of Nations has not itself been unaware of the possible dangers which lurk in the application of these Minority Treaties. At the meeting of the Third Assembly in 1922, Professor Gilbert Murray, then a British representative, carried a resolution which enables us to understand pretty accurately how the present trouble has arisen in Polish Upper Silesia. Professor Murray's resolution declares that "while the Assembly recognizes the primary right of the minorities to be protected by the League from oppression, it also emphasizes the duty incumbent upon persons belonging to racial, religious, or linguistic minorities to co-operate as loyal fellow-citizens with nations to which they now belong."

The League Council, as the executive organ of its Assembly, carried the spirit of this resolution into its whole actual administration. In order to discourage the practice of emphasizing minor grievances for the purposes of political propaganda, it took precautions to secure that only genuinely large questions of principle arising directly out of the application of these treaties should be discussed at the more public forum of the Council. It was recognized that genuine political agitators always thrive on publicity. They must have a gallery to which they can appeal in the full glare of the limelight. Accordingly, it was provided that the cases for aggrieved minorities could only be presented before the League as cases of

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private individuals who could act only by way of petition. These petitions were then to be submitted for preliminary examination to a commission, which had afterwards to decide whether they should further be transmitted to the Council. The idea was obviously to secure that, where minority complaints were real practical administrative grievances, they should be settled by administrative conferences in a spirit of sympathy and goodwill under the ægis of the League Commission, and should not be constantly referred to the supreme tribunal for the obvious purpose of impressing or rather disturbing the public opinion of Europe.

Now, it was exactly the allegation that the minority procedure of the League was being abused for ulterior political purposes that formed the main point of M. Zaleski's speech at the December Council. It was certainly not, as the official report plainly shows, an attempt to minimize the claims of a German minority, nor did it evince any disposition to detract from their privileges. As has already been pointed out, the procedure in this case was regulated by the Polish German Convention of 1922, and not by those general administrative regulations of the Council which have been already detailed. But all the same, there had evidently been some realization, when the Geneva Convention was framed, that its privileges might be abused for propaganda purposes. In the case of an educational grievance in this plebiscite Upper Silesia, the parents had first to make their complaint to a special Minorities Office created for this special purpose. This office investigated such complaints and made its recommendations to the impugned administration. If the result was unsatisfactory, or the recommendations disregarded, then a further appeal could be made to the president of a mixed commission of Germans and Poles who functioned already in the plebiscite province. They, in turn, had power to make further investigations and to forward their recommendation afterwards to the State concerned; and only if there were no prospect of a remedy, because the matter was either too complicated or involved important questions of principle, was it evidently contemplated that resort should be had to the Council of the League of Nations.

Any other course was obviously a wanton disregard

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of the uses of administrative machinery. It is very important and even indispensable to have an ultimate court of appeal, but when the perfect publicity of this court is to be used continually and often on the most trivial pretexts, then there is distinct reason to presume that there must be some ulterior reason animating the appellants. And when we go on to examine M. Adatchi's report on the question so appealed, then our conviction is vastly deepened that a very unfair use is being made of a great privilege. Technically, of course, the action of the German Volksbund was perfectly in order, and M. Briand was bound to assure them that the League Council would never forget "the sacred rights of the minorities." But there are many courses which are technically justifiable and yet, when pursued to extremities, may become a positive danger to the ultimate settlement of Europe.

Just think of the questions to which the League's Council—the world's super-Cabinet—was obliged to devote many hours of its valuable time. One was in regard to the minority school in the village of Nowawies, with its 300 pupils, five classes, and four teachers. Ought there to be five teachers instead of four in this village school? Should there not be a minority school in Wirek as well as in Nowawies? Would it not be practicable to set apart class-rooms for minority education in the mornings as well as in the afternoons? And why in this small district should not the education of the school be entrusted to a teacher belonging to the minority?

In themselves, to be sure, there is nothing unimportant or insignificant in these questions. When discussed, not in relation to the needs of a particular district, but as an issue of national policy, they gave rise in the British Parliament of 1902 to a succession of over-heated debates. But that is when they are quite definitely considered as an issue of national policy. There is nothing of such a sort on the present occasion. Germany and Poland have both signed the Geneva Convention of 1922. They have mutually agreed that minority schools in plebiscite Silesia should have their fair and adequate share of subvention from the State. There is no question here of a nonconformist conscience. There is no intention to brandish a revised edition of the Cowper-Temple

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clause. The only difference here is as to the administration of agreed general rules in the case of a particular district. In many cases it was found that the administrative questions at issue had already been solved, before the Council of the League was invited to take up their consideration. In others a real desire for conciliation and a *bona fide* attitude of mutual respect and goodwill would have secured a satisfactory result without any reference to the ultimate court of appeal. But the policy of the German Volksbund was obviously this, that the most trivial administrative differences should on all and on every occasion be forced through the agency of the League Council on the public attention of Europe. Is it reasonable to deny that there was no ulterior motive animating all this display of costly activity?

But now what may we expect to happen, when the Council of the League meets, if Dr. Stresemann abides by his notice of motion? That depends on how far he really goes when he is confronted with the actual situation. No doubt the question will be raised of the application of the minority treaties all round. In the *Times* of February 7, also, Sir Willoughby Dickinson, an old if not always wise campaigner in the cause of the minorities, threatens the world with an inquiry into the whole operation of the present minority treaties, as desired by the International Federation of League of Nations Societies. But Sir Willoughby was hardly careful enough in mastering his facts before he put his pen to this letter. He displays small consciousness of the provisions of the Geneva Convention when he laments that "Germany can get no consideration from the League for German-speaking subjects of Poland"; and, if for German-speaking subjects of Poland, why not for German-speaking subjects of Germany? Sir Willoughby must really not be so definitely one-sided; and frankly, the truest sentiment in his letter is that contained in the sentence where he affirms that "the question of minorities has really become one that threatens to disturb the peace."

So it does; and so it will do, unless the League provides against undesirable contingencies by taking a prudent and sensible view of the situation. Fortunately the Council of the League in the past has disregarded the voice of the political charmer and has refused to make the

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minorities' question the excuse for action which would add to the danger and unsettlement of Europe. It is to be confidently predicted that the same spirit will rule in official quarters on the present occasion. If the ultimate result is to improve the League's procedure, in the case of minority grievances, with the view of discouraging its abuse for propaganda purposes, then all will be well; but if the intention of Sir Willoughby and his friends is to compromise the League by embroiling it in all or most of the vexing controversies of Europe, then nothing but evil can result. Already it is reported that if Dr. Stresemann insists on giving his notice of motion a wider range, the countries of the Little Entente may propose that all other countries, large or small, Germany as well as Austria, shall be invited to bind themselves by minority treaties similar to those which are obligatory on the States of the Austrian succession. Is even Germany prepared to go as far as this? And if Germany is not, then her statesmen may live to regret that they have allowed the German Volksbund to get them involved in a perplexing situation. One thing is certain at any rate, and that is this, that to encourage minorities to hold themselves apart and, of set purpose, to exaggerate all their slightest grievances, is to render almost impossible the progress of parliamentary government and the establishment of economic and political pacification. How can Parliament develop anything like an effective executive in a country where there are not the two parties which alone can make parliamentary democracies successful, but instead of them a succession of groups and sub-groups, racial, economic, religious, darkening all far-seeing or effective counsel by the multiplicity of their strife? That, at any rate, must be the sole result of listening to those who would exacerbate this troublesome question of racial and religious minorities. Dr. Stresemann may yet find that he would have been much more prudent, and certainly infinitely better advised, if, in excusing the German Volksbund, he had fought shy of such a dangerous sentiment as that "sometimes high treason and love of the old country are very much akin," and had advised his clients to confine their activities to a rectification of any real administrative grievances without embarking on the thorny path of political agitation and revolt.

Ahmet Zogu, King of the Albanians

A Character Sketch

By J. S. Barnes

I FIRST met Ahmet Zogu, whose coronation as King of the Albanians is destined shortly to take place, in the spring of 1921, when I went to Albania on behalf of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company to negotiate a concession. He was then still under thirty, a handsome young man standing about 5 ft. 10 in. in his socks, blue eyed and fair of hair, lithe and energetic. Though only a simple deputy, he was already a marked man, a dark horse, suspected of unlimited ambition, but respected as a man of unbounded courage and undoubted ability, the hope of all who recognized the necessity for a strong government in Albania.

In point of education, he is largely self-taught. It is true he passed through the higher schools at Constantinople, in the days of the Turkish domination; but he never pursued his studies at the university, for he returned to his native land when still a boy to shoulder a rifle in the rebellion against the Turk which formed the prelude to the Balkan wars. A scion of the ruling house of Mati, one of the great Mohammedan mountain clans of Central Albania, which had never been properly conquered by the Turk, he inherited the fighting traditions of his race, together with a hatred of the Turk and the Serb, his country's traditional enemies. Mohammedan though he nominally was, he had become a freethinker and a mason in accordance with the fashion of the day and, like the majority of the freemen of the Albanian highlands, he had remained, despite the centuries of Turkish influence, an outstanding occidental, both in manners and outlook. The Albanian mountaineer, who preserves much of the purity of the old stock, driven back into the mountain fastnesses before the successive invasions of Eastern tribes, Slav or Mongol, manifests indeed an

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astounding resemblance to the Irishman. Probably his origin is also Celtic. He possesses much the same tribal organization as did the Irish, he divides his allegiance like the Irishman of old between his clan and his country, is a born fighter, prefers sport to work, exhibits a sense of humour altogether Irish, and, like the Irishman, looks back nostalgically to a mythical golden age before the foreigner brought the sword and famine to his land.

When the Great War broke out, Ahmet's sympathies were very naturally for the Austrian; for Austria stood for the anti-Slav, and her interests, had she won the war, would have undoubtedly led to the creation of an Albania (subservient, no doubt, but autonomous) continuous with those natural frontiers, both geographical and ethnical, which the Allies have denied her. So Ahmet learned German, engaged his tribe in a guerilla warfare against the Italians, and apprenticed himself in the art of diplomacy and foreign affairs through the relations he entered into with the Austrian command.

When I met him first in 1921, I was immediately struck by his personality, especially by his ability to keep his own counsel. He was a genuinely strong, silent man, and, unlike many of his countrymen, an exceedingly hard worker. Moreover, I found him frank, and I have never known him go back upon his word, although he must often have been tempted to do so, as we shall see. He had all the mountaineer's sense of honour, even if he had at the same time all the mountaineer's inability to forget or forgive an injury. The spirit of vendetta runs strong in his veins. He was obviously obsessed by personal ambition, but I did not doubt that this ambition of his would override, as was the case of Essad Pasha, with whom his enemies and critics had a habit of comparing him, his unquestionable patriotism. He always appeared to me to identify his ambitions with the glory of Albania.

In 1921 the question of Albania's future constitutional status was at stake. There was a small party of convinced republicans, mostly composed of Albanians returned from America (among them Bishop Fan Noli, Ahmet's political arch-enemy) and of the small professional classes of the south. The remainder all recognized

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that a monarchy was needed in Albania. Monarchy responded to the traditions and interests of the mountain tribes and of the big Beys, who formed the backbone of the country. Actually the country was reigned over by a Regency Council, composed of four elder statesmen, each belonging to one of the religions (Catholic, Orthodox, Sunni and Bektashi) into which Albanian society is divided. The real power was in the hands of a nominally popularly elected assembly. Although, however, the great majority of this assembly were in favour of a monarchy, there was much intrigue over the manner of bringing monarchy into being. Nobody wanted back the ineffectual Prince of Wied. Nobody wanted another choice by the intriguing powers of Europe. Yet all agreed, with the possible exception of Ahmet Zogu himself (though he kept his own counsel), that a King of Albanian race was out of the question. It would have roused too many jealousies between the various clans. The plan generally agreed upon by the majority was accordingly simple and sensible. A constituent assembly would be convened and would be charged with the task of preparing a monarchical constitution, whereupon a committee would be formed for the purpose of choosing a suitable High Commissioner, with the powers and prerogatives of a King; and this High Commissioner, most Albanians agreed, must be an English gentleman of administrative experience and knowledge of the world. An Englishman was preferred, because it was justly recognized that among Englishmen the choice of a suitable man was wider, on account of England's vast colonial empire where thousands of Englishmen had gained the experience of ruling foreign races; because the reputation of English rule stood proverbially high in respect of justice and efficiency; and because England was not directly interested from a political point of view in Albania's fate. So an English High Commissioner, who, later, it was anticipated, would blossom into a King, might be relied upon, better than any other foreigner, to play Albania's game rather than that of his own country.

Such was the plan; but it was conceived without taking into consideration the personal appetites and ambitions of the various groups which formed the majority

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of deputies. Each group desired to achieve its own choice in order that it might become the group on whom would fall, in due time, the promised blessings of regal favours. Each group sought to have its own candidate. The most fantastic suggestions were mooted around. The name of the late Mr. Aubrey Herbert, M.P., was eagerly canvassed. So likewise was that of Miss Edith Durham and even my own—anyone, whether suitable or otherwise, who was known to have feelings of goodwill towards Albania.

It was in these circumstances that I boldly entered the arena, surcharged with the most stifling atmosphere of intrigue. Looking back on events, it is not surprising that nothing came of my intervention. But it brought me right into the thick of affairs and led me to know Zogu very well indeed and to respect him more than ever. I formulated a plan, which was duly laid before, discussed and finally accepted by, an informal committee of the more prominent monarchists. All the candidates hitherto canvassed were to be withdrawn, while I was to be charged with the making of inquiries in England and with securing a name of outstanding merit for the post of High Commissioner, who would then at the propitious moment be invited to take over his responsibilities. Not one of the chiefs dissented from this plan. All but one definitely approved it. The one exception was Zogu. He remained silent, keeping his own counsel.

Meantime, I made my choice and the choice was provisionally approved. Something might have come of it, if events in Albania had not begun to move with kaleidoscopic rapidity. The intrigues of the politicians, thinking chiefly of their own interests; the division of the country into two main camps, that of the great landlords and clan-lords with their clientele, and that of the professional classes; the plots and counter-plots of the Serb, the Greek and the Italian, brought about conditions which made the task of constitution-making a purely academic exercise. There were one, two, three violent revolutions in succession. The first had brought Zogu right into the forefront. The second had brought the republican party into power and had made Zogu a fugitive in Serbia. And then it was that Zogu did something which made me for six whole months wonder

if he were not an Essad Pasha after all. He proceeded to recruit an army in Serbia among the Albanian tribesmen over the border. The Serbs winked at it. Several Serb officers were placed on the retired list, joined him and assisted him to drill his troops. Money was supplied in abundance; also arms and ammunition, including mountain artillery. A number of officers and non-commissioned officers of General Wrangel's ex-army of Russians were encouraged to lend him their aid. Moreover, it leaked out that he had formally promised Serbia a cession of territory. What did this mean? Was he aiming, like Essad Pasha, at carving out for himself a principality in the centre of Albania, where his own tribe dominated? Was he prepared to allow the rest to become the prey to a policy of partition between Serbia, Italy and Greece? Had he sold Scutari to the Serbs, who had never ceased to covet this most Albanian of cities, had never ceased to intrigue to gain possession of it? At first sight it looked very like it. In any case, how could he escape from being the pawn of the Serbs, to whom he was to owe his restoration to power? He marched. Fan Noli, who had proved himself an incompetent prime minister, and had lost caste everywhere, was incapable of organizing any resistance. He had no alternative but to flee in his turn. It was Zogu's hour of triumphal revenge. He swept the Regency Council aside and outbid the republican party itself by formally declaring Albania a Republic with himself as President, a President, moreover, with practically full powers, that kind of a President, such as was Louis Napoleon, whose foot was already on the steps of a throne.

The Serbs thereupon demanded their pound of flesh. Zogu kept them waiting, while he proceeded to consolidate his power. The Serbs became impatient, whereupon Zogu entered into negotiations with a view to the cession of territory formally promised. But meanwhile he made friends with Italy. This strengthened his hands and weakened that of the Serbs, who had for the time being to content themselves with the cession of Sveti Naum, a small monastery of historical associations on the border, and with a small rectification of the frontier line in the direction of Dibra. But the Serbs were by no means

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satisfied. They did everything that was possible to undermine Zogu's position; but Zogu countered their moves by a ruthless policy of suppression of his adversaries at home and by drawing closer to Italy, from whom he acquired a considerable loan and to whom he granted a number of important economic concessions. Then it was that the Serbs attempted to repeat with Zogu's adversaries the same game that Zogu had himself played. The result was a treaty of friendship between Italy and Albania. The Serbs, however, as yet undeterred, proceeded with their preparations for a disguised invasion of Albania, whereupon the treaty of friendship with Italy was altered into a treaty of alliance, by which Italy pledged herself to support Zogu's personal regime. This was indeed the prelude to his becoming King; for to pledge oneself to support a personal regime entailed the necessity of placing that regime on a legitimately permanent basis. At the same time Italy circularized the Powers, drawing their attention to the Serb military preparations on the frontier. Thus the Serb game was unmasked and with its unmasking it collapsed. Zogu had won and had justified himself before his people.

In pursuing this policy of friendship with Italy Zogu not only showed himself possessed of great political acumen, but he revealed to me his constancy and consistency. I regretted my short period of doubting him. I recalled a long conversation I had had with him shortly after the incident of Corfu, a conversation well worth recording. I had motored over the road where General Tellini had been murdered, only a fortnight afterwards, and had remarked on the careful way in which that road was patrolled by the Greek troops, so that I had wondered how it was possible that the murder could have been perpetrated without the connivance of the Greek authorities. I taxed Zogu with his opinion. "It is the usual Balkan game," he said. "You, with your knowledge of the Balkans, will have guessed that much. I even know the name of the assassin. It is an open secret; but the Greeks will cover up his tracks all right. His name is Rentzo,* a notorious brigand, and he was

* This has since been confirmed and the brothers Rentzo are now under arrest in Greece.

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hired for the purpose. The chief instigator of the crime is Kolovros, a member of the Epirot Committee, having relations with the Greek minority in Argyrocastro. The purpose of the plot is obvious. The work of the boundary commission is now interrupted. Result number one. Moreover, they struck at the representative of the Power which was alone definitely interested in maintaining the present boundary in Albania's favour. They also reckoned that Italy was the one Power less likely to react strongly; but they reckoned without Mussolini. They calculated that Italy would send in a claim of compensation, that Greece would acknowledge the claim in principle, but appeal to the League against the amount claimed with the real object of raising her grievances before the League, which is not responsible for the present frontier. Greece would deplore the murder, but plead that the real cause of it was the unjust frontier, a frontier which permitted Albanian bands to raid across it with impunity or, if it happened to be proved that it was Greeks who committed the murder, a frontier which was so unjust that the Greeks within Albania had no alternative but to refuse to take it lying down. From this it was hoped that the League would re-open the whole frontier question. But Mussolini, in refusing to allow the question to be taken up by the League, though he has laid himself open to the technically just accusation that he has let down the League, has really done the one thing consistent with morality, for he has thereby scotched the game of the murderers."

"And what do you think of Italy's occupation of Corfu?" I asked. "It is a high-handed action, but it will leave no permanent results," he answered. "It is justified by very special circumstances. You must remember that Italy had lost all prestige in the Adriatic. A small handful of Albanian irregulars had driven the Italian troops to within the interior defences of Valona, whereupon the Italian Government had consented to evacuate the place practically unconditionally, after a mutiny of Italian troops, destined for Valona, had taken place at Ancona. People had ceased to believe in the Italian army. They would refuse to go overseas, so it was said. The Yugoslavs believe that if a

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war broke out, they would be in Trieste within a week. Consequently it is impossible for Italy to obtain a working compromise over the Fiume question. But Mussolini has now called the bluff. He has shown that the moral of the Italian army has been regained. This business provided an opportunity not to be missed, and you will see that the Fiume question will now be quickly settled."

Prophetic words! But I pressed Zogu further. "Has not Albania, then, in these changed circumstances, as much to fear from Italy as from Yugoslavia?" I asked. "Not at all," he answered. "I fear a weak Italy. I do not fear a strong Italy. A weak Italy, as we have learned from bitter experience, will be an intriguing Italy, an Italy content with the minimum, and the minimum is Valona, which would mean a plot to partition Albania. But a strong Italy means that she will want Albania to be as large as possible; but she will not want to conquer us provided we do not fall into a state of anarchy, for a conquest of Albania would be a costly business, and would permanently weaken Italy since it would mean the permanent occupation of the country by a large body of troops. A strongly organized, independent Albania, on the other hand, is all that Italy requires. Albania would then become to Italy what Belgium is to England. Nothing more and nothing less. That is why I have no fear of a strong Italy. Besides, we want Italy's help. We fear Yugoslavia, who has never ceased to attempt to acquire Scutari and blocks our ideal of an Albania with natural geographical and ethnical frontiers. Moreover, it is Italy's economic interest to develop Albania. It is no other great Power's interest to do so; and we need, above all else, capital. We can only get it from Italy. We also need Italy's cultural help. We intend to live up to our origins and shake off the influence of the East. We are a Western people, and we need to be penetrated by Western culture. So we have everything to gain and little to lose by reinforcing our relations with Italy, provided Italy is strong. This sounds like a paradox, but it is true."

This conversation took place in 1923, and Zogu has since carried out the policy therein foreshadowed to the letter. Consistency is often another name for loyalty and

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Zogu has proved his loyalty in many other ways. He had pledged his word, for example, both to me and to Sir Harry Eyres, to whom, by the way, he owed his life on one memorable occasion, to see that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's concession was duly piloted through Parliament. He had every temptation both by pressure and inducement to close with the Anglo-Persian's rivals during the long, wearisome period which elapsed after the original draft had been signed and the final agreement of the detailed terms. He resisted; and one of the first of his acts on becoming President was to ratify the documents. His own loyal nature drew him to prefer Englishmen to any other foreigner because "they are simple," he used to say. "With Englishmen you know exactly where you stand. To negotiate with Englishmen after negotiating with other foreigners is like taking a rest cure! Not that I consider Englishmen necessarily as more honest than others, but they are straight and simple. Their sense of superiority, coupled with their simplicity, makes them, as a rule, dislike us southerners because we are cleverer than they. But *we* like them, even though some of them may get too frequently drunk and break up coffee houses—really, indeed, you ought to be more careful in your selection of the people you send out to represent your businesses abroad. As long as the Anglo-Persian is represented by men like Captain Shearme, well and good. But there are others . . . drunkenness is evidently one of your *faibles*. And, gracious, you can be naïve sometimes! When it leaked out that we were thinking of choosing an Englishman to be our King, we received over seventy applications for the post, mostly from the suburbs of London! One was even a dentist; but him, I suppose, we can excuse—he, evidently, justly considered himself an expert in golden crowns!!"

Zogu, indeed, is a shrewd judge of character, and if he has shown himself on occasion unscrupulous and ruthless, it may be granted that his excellent humour reveals his essential humanity. Long may he be allowed to continue the good work begun. For he has already transformed Albania. The progress made in recent years under his hard but efficient rule is truly

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prodigious. Good roads have been constructed or are in course of construction. Tirana has become a pleasant city with quite good hotels. Agriculture, the basic industry of the country, has made leaps ahead. Foreign trade and revenue are daily on the increase. Stable currency conditions have been established. Education has been encouraged. The army has been reorganized under Italian officers, the gendarmerie under English officers—while a number of experts—Italian, Hungarian and English (the administrative adviser is Colonel Stirling, late Governor of Jaffa) have been appointed to aid in the task of reconstruction. There is still much to do and the great obstacles no doubt are the underfed and malaria-riven population of the plains and the fatalism engendered by the Mohammedan religion. Attempts are being made to deal with the former difficulty but progress here must necessarily be long. As for the latter, there are rumours that the King intends to lead the way with a conversion to the religion of his ancestors. If he can afford to do this, even though it may be done for reasons of State, rather than from purely religious motives, others are likely to follow suit, and thus Albania will have the chance of growing into a truly Western nation, which at heart she is. Her path will become the path of civilization.

Edgar Allan Poe

By E. J. Martin

MORE than a hundred years ago a jobbing printer in Boston published (though that is hardly the word) a small duodecimo of forty pages, covered in yellow paper and entitled "Tamerlane, and other Poems. By a Bostonian." It is not likely that any copies were sold. Five still survive, and the last that came on the market fetched some £2,000.* All his twenty years' service to literature hardly brought the Bostonian as much. For that Bostonian was one of the two or three Americans whose writings matter, Edgar Allan Poe. No significance lies in the fate of this first venture. Few authors have walked at once into fame. But misfortune dogged Poe from first to last, so persistently that the tragic drama of his life has threatened to divert attention entirely from his work. While primarily Poe's life is important for the elucidation of his Art, almost from the first it was studied for its own sake, since human nature is more generally attractive than Art. The interest was heightened by the insufficiency of the data, by Poe's own passion for "spoofing" his history, by the reticence of those who might have known the facts, and by the undue loquacity of those who did not. Every fresh contributor to the subject was enlisted as antagonist or champion not of the artist but of the man. Of recent years much fresh material has been made public, from the papers of the firm of Ellis and Allan (Poe's foster-father) and from the Valentine correspondence (the Valentines representing the family of the first Mrs. Allan). An illuminating biography, disfigured by pretentious chapter headings and a showman style ("Israfel," by Hervey Allen, 2 vols., London, 1927) has made accessible all that is now known. The literary fame of Poe has been more and more firmly established.†

* The fifth only came to light last year (1928). Rumours of fabulous offers for it are in circulation.

† The best critical study of him is "Edgar Allan Poe," by J. W. Krutch. London, 1926.

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On the other hand, after his defence has been heard from the ablest of his advocates, Poe remains a very unpleasant type. His first biographer, Griswold, summed up against him like a hanging judge under the impression that he was required to anticipate the Last Judgment. The fact remains, however, that Griswold was not far wide of the mark :

His harsh experience had deprived him of all faith, in man or woman. He had made up his mind upon the numberless complexities of the social world, and the whole system with him was an imposture. . . . This conviction gave a direction to his shrewd and naturally unamiable character. Still, though he regarded society as composed altogether of villains, the sharpness of his intellect was not of that kind which enabled him to cope with villainy, while it continually caused him by overshots to fail of the success of honesty. . . . Passion in him comprehended many of the worst emotions which militate against human happiness. You could not contradict him, but you raised quick choler ; you could not speak of wealth, but his cheek paled with gnawing envy. The astonishing natural advantages of this poor boy—his beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere—had raised his constitutional self-confidence into an arrogance that turned his very claims to admiration into prejudice against him. Irascible, envious—bad enough, but not the worst, for these salient angles were all varnished over with a cold repellent cynicism, his passions vented themselves in sneers. There seemed to him no moral susceptibilities ; and, what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of honour. He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no wish for the esteem or the love of his species ; only the hard wish to succeed—not shine, not serve—succeed, that he might have the right to despise a world which galled his self-conceit.

Something of this personality betrays itself in Poe's work—subconsciously, of course, and indirectly. For only the least subtle of artists—copyists rather than creators—will purposefully turn their craft into a confessional.

In Poe's day the young American nation was just beginning to feel its life ; "a great gas-lit barbarism" is Baudelaire's description of it. It had barely outlined its own institutions, and for its ideals, especially in Art and Letters, it still looked across the Atlantic. It was Poe's greatness that he bade it look at home, and that he set himself to put his advice into operation. His own descent was American only on his father's side ; his mother had been born in England. Both parents were on the stage, both were poor, both died before Edgar was old enough

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to know them, a combination of circumstances unfavourable to stability in the character of their children. The eldest child went to the father's relations in Boston. Of the younger, the girl (of whose legitimacy some doubt exists) went into a Richmond family, while Edgar, then in his fourth year, was taken by John Allan, another Richmond citizen, an exporter of tobacco, Scotch by descent and moderately prosperous. It was Mrs. Allan, with the childless woman's unsatisfied affection, who loved and spoiled Edgar. Allan himself was an unattractive figure. He belongs to a type common in the nineteenth century. He tempered middle-class respectability and Sunday worship in the family pew at the Richmond Episcopal Church with more than one illegitimate family. The least pleasant feature about him is his whining reference to these love affairs preserved in his Will. But some, possibly all, of these children he maintained during his lifetime. Moreover, though through the bequest of an uncle he eventually died a rich man, he was not until then remarkably well-off and had many poor relations in Scotland to whom at times he sent money. There is more excuse than is sometimes allowed him for his neglect to complete the legal adoption of Edgar, as the latter's use of the name Allan implies was expected. For twenty years Allan treated the boy as his own, maintained and educated him. Some say that he did it meanly, sending him to the University with funds insufficient even to cover the necessary expenses. One doubts this. When Edgar was at school in England (1815-1820) the chief impression his schoolmaster Bransby preserved was that the boy had too much pocket-money. All the signs show Edgar the spoilt child, indulged by a foolish mother, until the threshold of manhood finds him incapable of curbing his extravagance.

It seems clear enough that during his schooldays, both during the English visit between 1815 and 1820 and subsequently in Richmond, he lacked effective handling. Mrs. Allan's affection was insufficient by itself; it had poor support in Allan's uncertain temper. Towards the end of the schoolboy period these personal influences changed markedly for the worse. Mrs. Allan fell into ill-health and estrangement grew between her and her

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husband. Possibly it was because she discovered his infidelities; possibly it was due to the rupture of their domestic relations; possibly Allan was actually jealous of his adopted son. A new master over the Richmond school added to the nervous strain these domestic incidents imposed on Edgar at the very time that he was meeting the difficulties of adolescence. The effect probably lasted for life. Certainly relations between Allan and himself grew steadily worse. Allan's self-esteem was probably not lessened by inheriting in 1825 a fortune of nearly a million dollars from his uncle, William Galt.

Schooldays over, Edgar spent part of a year (1826) at the new University of Virginia at Charlottesville. His academic career was entirely creditable, save that he entered into the morass of debt from which he was never to extricate himself. Allan apparently wanted him to learn habits of economy empirically. Poe replied by amassing debts of all kinds, many of them incurred in gambling and drinking. For a single term his debts ran to some £500, which would be a pretty high achievement at an English university a century later, with money at a much lower value. Allan's position asks for some sympathy. Even if he had been Edgar's natural father, he could hardly have faced the situation with equanimity. As it was, he elected, no doubt with the best intentions, to play the heavy parent, and accordingly brought Edgar's college life to a premature end.

Between Edgar's self-esteem and Allan's irritability there was little chance of peace. Early in 1827 Allan ordered his protégé out of his house, and Edgar went. After writing an abusive letter, he followed it the next day with a very mild request for money to save him from starvation. "I have not one cent in the world to provide any food." This appeal Allan endorsed laconically, "Pretty letter."

The inner life of the man cannot but contribute to the making of the artist. Of incident there is little in Poe's life, but of psychological adventure much. The foundations of the poet and artist were laid in the household of John Allan. "Misery is manifold," Poe says in "Berenice." This is a leading theme of his. It begins in his own personality. It may well be, as

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Rémy de Gourmont suggested, that the very lack of parental guidance, which was the cause of Poe's unhappiness, was also the cause of his originality.

By means unknown Poe made his way to Boston, arranged for the printing of that volume which begins his career of letters, and enlisted as a private soldier in the United States Artillery under the name of Edgar A. Perry. He must have given his mind to his work, for by January 1829 he had been promoted regimental sergeant-major. By the same period he was again in touch with Allan, who now offered to help him to enter the Military Academy at West Point, to gain a commission. Poe accepted the offer, but with no firm intention of fulfilling his contract. The University and a life of literature was his aim. The Military Academy might come nearer to it than the non-commissioned officers' mess. As Mrs. Allan died on February 28, 1829, Poe had little to expect in Richmond. The months that elapsed between his discharge from the ranks and his entrance into the Academy were spent in Baltimore with his paternal aunt, Mrs. Clemm, who had probably taken him in before his enlistment, and was later to take him in for the rest of his life.

Poe was still harassed with debt. His late comrades of the garrison began to ask for the return of small loans. It was a misreading of the letter of one of these duns that created the report that Poe had forged Allan's signature. He did not do that, but he did what annoyed Allan very little less. He wrote to one pressing creditor that "Mr. Allan is not very often sober." When eventually Allan saw this letter, it filled the cup of his rage.

During this stay in Baltimore Poe published his first real volume, for the earlier one printed in 1827 never got into circulation. The new venture was entitled "Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems." It was an octavo of 71 pages in blue boards, issued by Hatch and Dunning. The inspiration of Byron, Scott, and Moore are easy to trace, but it contains two poems which give some evidence of the poet's powers. "Invitation" contained the germ of what later became the characteristic "A Dream within a Dream." "To Science" appeared more nearly in the form in which it survives. It already

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had two of its best lines, though even they are not without a flavour of other poets :

Hast thou not dragged Diana from her car
And driven the hamadryad from the wood ?

The volume is significant only because it gives us the means of seeing the artist in Poe working at his material and making his work steadily better. Nothing is stronger evidence of Poe's poetic quality than this fact, that in his frequent recasting of his work he always improved it.

The Military Academy period was a passing and meaningless episode. Poe entered West Point on June 25, 1830, and discovering that Allan was determined that he should remain there and qualify as an officer and a gentleman, decided that he would show who was master of his fate. Accordingly he absented himself from all duty for a fortnight and was successfully expelled on February 19, 1831. He planned a monument to his achievement by securing subscriptions from his fellow-cadets and publishing a revised version of his last volume. It was renamed "Poems: Second Edition." It was issued in green boards by Elam Bliss in New York. It is a volume of importance. It contains a long preface in which Poe for the first time states his poetic theory; it contains also the first version under other titles of several of his best pieces, "Lenore," "The Sleeper," "The Doomed City," "Israfel," "To Helen." Collations of Poe's various texts show how persistently he worked towards perfection. The original of a famous passage in the "Doomed City" (then named "The City in the Sea") ran :

Light from the lurid, deep sea
Streams up the turrets silently—
Up thrones—up long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptur'd ivy and stone flowers—
Up domes—up spires—up kingly halls—
Up fanes—up Babylon-like walls—
Up many a melancholy shrine
Whose entablatures intertwine
The mask—the viol—and the vine.

The final version reads :

But light from out the lurid sea
Streams up the turrets silently.
Gleams up the pinnacles far and free :

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Up domes, up spires, up kingly halls,
Up fanes, up Babylon-like walls,
Up shadowy long-forgotten bowers
Of sculptured ivy and stone flowers,
Up many and many a marvellous shrine
Whose wreathed friezes intertwine
The viol, the violet, and the vine.

The closing stanza of "Israfel," which concentrates all the arrogance and much of the art of Poe, was originally in 1831:

If I did dwell where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He would not sing one half so well—
One half so passionately,
While a stormier note than this would swell
From my lyre within the sky.

This finally became:

If I could dwell
Where Israfel
Hath dwelt, and he where I,
He might not sing so wildly well
A mortal melody,
While a bolder note than this might swell
From my lyre within the sky.

In this volume Poe set out a theory and practice from which he scarcely deviated in the rest of his life. He laid down his principles: (1) that only poets can criticize poets, (2) that a poet is himself quite capable of being his own best critic, (3) that reason (or intellect) has no relation to poetry, (4) that the pleasure evoked by poetry should not be definite, like that produced by a picture, but indefinite, like that produced by music. He means that poetry should suggest and imply rather than state or describe. In a later essay, "The Poetic Principle," he added two more canons: (5) that a true poem must be short, and (6) that poetry must not be didactic. By this last he really meant that the poet must not preach nor hint at a moral.

The Poetic Principle is for him the human aspiration for supernal Beauty; the "manifestation of the Principle is always found in an elevating excitement of the Soul, quite independent of that Passion which is the intoxication of the Heart or of that Truth which

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is the satisfaction of the Reason." He speaks also of the effect as the recognition of a harmony, and admits that both emotion and reason may be instruments in revealing the harmony.

Unfortunately for Poe, though he possessed the power to take a far wider sweep, he was so infuriated with the provincialism of American writers that he circumscribed his field and failed to let himself be that rare thing, a genuine critic in an English-speaking country. It was this that led him to protest so strongly against didacticism. Poe is thinking not primarily of the poetry of Reason—that of Lucretius, for example—but of the contemporary affection for moral platitudes in verse, in which the school of Longfellow wallowed. Sentimentalism besets all weak artists, whatever their medium. But Longfellow, like Mrs. Wilcox, was not a bad poet because he loved pious aphorisms; he loved platitude because his taste was uncertain, and he lacked that fullness that comes from having examined the first principles of life. There is nothing in Poe's theory of poetry that is vitally incompatible with Wordsworth's definition of the poet as "a man speaking to men" or "a man who rejoices more than other men in the spirit of life that is in him," even though Poe condemned whole-heartedly much of the poetry that Wordsworth's theory produced. Poe applies his own theory with over-logical consistency. Except in so far as all poetry is a kind of thinking he avoids all appeal to the intellect, and except in so far as any idea evokes some emotion however feeble, he avoids all direct appeal to the heart. The effect is somewhat inhuman. Poe's world is that in which Dante placed the Pope of the Great Renunciation, neither light nor darkness, neither of good nor of evil.

When the 1831 volume appeared, Poe was living with and on the Clemm family in Baltimore, in continual poverty. More than once he applied to Allan for relief. In January 1832 Allan sent money, apparently to keep him out of gaol. His latest surviving letter to Allan, dated April 12, 1833, is another begging appeal. Allan died in the spring of 1834, leaving a second wife and three children. His long and complicated Will made provision for some of his illegitimate children, but none for Poe.

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His last word on Poe is found endorsed on a letter, written to him by Poe: "April 12th 1833: it is now upwards of two years since I received the above precious relict of the Blackest Heart & deepest ingratitude alike destitute of honour and principle; every day of his life has only served to confirm his debased nature—Suffice it to say my only regret is in Pity for his failings—his Talents are of an order that can never prove a comfort to their possessor."

Poe's work now began to see the light. In 1833 he won a prize for a short story in the *Baltimore Saturday Visitor*, and the writing of stories became his main activity. The incidents of his life from this period are trivial, a wandering elusion of poverty and pursuit of journalism in several cities. He was stalked by worse enemies than poverty. His health, never robust, grew steadily worse. His heart showed signs of disease. A disease even more deadly was the sporadic bouts of mad drinking which led to attacks of delirium tremens. "What disease is like alcohol?" he asks in "The Black Cat." To stay this craving, possibly even to stay the pangs of hunger, he drugged himself with opium. As time passed, Poe became less and less of a sane man. He saw all too clearly the raven seated on the bust of Pallas above his chamber door, the black shadow of insanity threatening his intellect. Either from his opium-eating or through some psychological inhibition he was sexually abnormal. His relationship with women was always close and always platonic. His so-called love affairs are numerous but frigid. His marriage was wildly absurd. Virginia Clemm was his cousin. He married her when she was fourteen, never took her from her mother's home, found in her infantile consumptive life some image of the necrophilic passion of his tales. "My passions always were of the mind," he says in "Berenice."

My love she sleeps. Oh may her sleep
As it is lasting, so be deep.
Soft may the worms about her creep.

It is true that one of his flames, Mary Devereaux, of Baltimore, made accusations against him that might imply an attempted seduction; but it is equally likely that they do not imply anything of the kind, but some form of exhibitionism. The love motif, which is found in

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nearly every one of his poems, is always a frustrated love, shadowy, inhuman, bloodless :

Where thy footstep gleams
In what ethereal dances,
By what eternal streams.

In 1833 Poe was firmly established in journalism, working on the staff of paper after paper, losing his post by his follies or resigning in a temper, drifting from Richmond to New York, from New York to Philadelphia, from Philadelphia back to New York. He published most of his poems, tales, and criticism in the papers he served, never hesitating to print again what had already been printed three or four times elsewhere, but still revising and improving his poems with every fresh publication.

Four further books, three prose and one verse, were published in his lifetime. Except "Eureka," the verse volume was the last, "The Raven, and other Poems," published in New York in 1845. It made Poe famous. But though showing remarkable technical advance, its poetic quality is below that of the volume of 1831. "The Raven," to which Poe owed his popular fame, is one of his inferior pieces. It is inferior because Poe has stepped from symbolism into allegory. The idea of grief sinking into insanity is treated with images rather than symbols. The consequent excess of the concrete lowers the atmosphere. "The Raven" is below Poe's usual level for the same reason as Hawthorne's tales are below Poe's. His two greatest technical achievements were not issued in volume form during his lifetime. These were "The Bells" and "Annabel Lee," both of them masterpieces of form. The only piece of real poetical importance belonging to the last period is the poignant "For Annie."

The Tales, which have often been acclaimed as Poe's finest work, were collected by Poe himself twice, the Philadelphia edition in 1840 and the New York one in 1845. Here again the earlier issue contains Poe's masterpieces. Here also the new material of the later volume (which is only a selection) is marked by great improvement but only in technique. It contains "The Gold Bug" and the other stories of detection which are great *tour de*

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force. But it is the psychic romances that give Poe a unique place: "Ligeia," "William Wilson," "Berenice," "Silence," "Shadow," and the rest. These depend upon the same qualities as his poetry; indeed, they are part of his poetry. They move, like his verse, in the world of the shadow, of nature conceived in terms of personality, and of personality inter-penetrated by other personalities. The detective series and the long "Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" are only clever. The pieces that attempt humour are often mere trash. Stevenson, for one, thought cold inhumanity one of Poe's most complete achievements. He has been outmatched in horror by his disciple, Ambrose Bierce, just because Bierce is more human. Poe was a man purely of ideas. That he is apparently a master of the concrete is deceptive. When he lets the concrete control him, he is always in danger of sinking into allegory. The end of the "Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym" is a good illustration. Poe is on safe ground only so long as he allows the language of things to be symbols—that is, the mere clothing of his ideas.

It is as a critic that Poe most nearly approaches his poetic level. And that was according to plan. He held strongly to the doctrine that poet and critic must be interchangeable terms. Here he was something more than a pioneer. English criticism in any accurate sense hardly existed in Poe's lifetime. What went by the name in England too often took the form of almost insanely ferocious attacks on authors, like the "Quarterly" reviews, or of irrelevant examinations of the subject treated by the writer under discussion, like Macaulay's "Essays." In America, the place of criticism was taken by fulsome and unintelligent log-rolling. Poe could have made criticism relevant and honest, and in some measure did so. His own sound—not infallible—judgment added something of permanent meaning to his criticisms. Many of his most original judgments have been proved by time to be among his sanest, but he can be hopelessly wild, as in his discussion of classical metre. He detected the essentially commonplace character of Macaulay's mind and the superiority of Hawthorne to all his American contemporaries. He is particularly good in putting the

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second- and third-rate authors in their place—the Marryats, Lyttons, Coopers—and he does it effectively by what seems a simple analysis of their weaknesses. Poe's criticism, when it rises above arrogant abuse, is sane rather than penetrating. It is easy, free from forced cleverness or effort after point. It is seen perhaps at its best in the random passages collected as "Marginalia." Among many other wise things here is a criticism of Gibbon's style which anticipates the best things in Bagehot's essay.

Poe's own prose style is straightforward and clear. It is often tasteless and it lacks finesse, but it is capable of impressive moments :

And the shadow answered, "I am SHADOW, and my dwelling is near to the Catacombs of Ptolemais, and hard by those dim plains of Helusion which border upon the foul Charonian canal." And then did we, the seven, start from our seats in horror, and stand trembling, and shuddering, and aghast : for the tones in the voice of the shadow were not the tones of any one being, but of a multitude of beings, and, varying in their cadences from syllable to syllable, fell duskily upon our ears in the well remembered and familiar accents of many thousand departed friends.

Poe's greatest gift was taste, a quality extremely rare in the America of that day, and even in him often uncertain. It is seen in minor points like the mottoes prefixed to his Tales. Unerringly he finds the unfamiliar fine thing "Tom o' Bedlam's Song" or Henry King's "Exequy." His taste is not prejudiced by the fact that he picked up his gobbets without reading the context. He picked with judgment. This is one of the qualities that make his critical essays important. Indiscriminate and often insignificant as are his materials, he has a consistent objective—the education of American æsthetic opinion—and he rarely misses his target. If anything, he over-estimates the ignorance of the audience to which he addresses himself, and says many things that are obvious, trivial, and even extravagant ; but the accuracy of his aim enables him in spite of all to make permanent contributions to the general body of literary appreciation.

The last years of Poe's life are a tragedy with little relief. His wife became a complete invalid in 1842 and Poe, unable to stand the strain, began to break up physically and morally. In March 1843 he visited

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Washington too drunk to deliver the lecture that had been advertised or to pay an intended visit to the President. That was typical of his closing years. His sense of honour was growing blunted. At the time he was borrowing money from Griswold, he was ridiculing him anonymously in the Press. He was in such abject poverty that his dying wife lay in a bed without a single blanket. The whole family probably went days without food. He developed an obsession of persecution. Miserable quarrels, petty personal abuse, and a libel action added to his cup of bitterness. During these last years he must have passed from intermittent delirium tremens to close contact with insanity. After his wife's death he wooed two, if not three, widows simultaneously; he tried to poison himself with laudanum; and very shortly before his own end he called in Philadelphia on John Sartain, the publisher of one of the magazines to which he contributed, and, raving about a conspiracy, asked for a razor to shave off his moustache and hide his identity. From there he went to Richmond, where he slept for several nights on the sanded floor of a low tavern.

The end came in 1849. While drunk he was entrapped in Baltimore by an election gang, drugged, and left unconscious in the street. Dr. Snodgrass, of Baltimore, received the following letter: "Dear Sir, There is a gentleman, rather the worse for wear, at Ryan's 4th ward polls, who goes under the cognomen of Edgar A. Poe, and who appears in great distress, and he says he is acquainted with you, and I assure you he is in need of immediate assistance. Yours in haste, Jos. W. Walker." Four days later, on October 7, 1849, he died. Four persons besides the officiating minister followed his body to the grave.

One of his flames, Mary Devereaux, said that "he scoffed at everything sacred and never went to church." His attitude to God is as dark as his attitude to women. Mary Devereaux was probably no great authority on the hidden man of the heart. The two or three obscure dicta on God and the world found in his "Marginalia" do not carry us much further than an indication that the colour of his mind was rationalistic. His last published work, "Eureka," is intended to give his theory of the

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Universe. So far as its meaning is coherent, it implies, what indeed may be deduced from the rest of Poe's work, that the ideal he conceived was escape from self by the abnegation of personality, and the perpetuation of the vital spark in the great spaces of the stars. So far as any name can be attached to the system, it may be called a non-theistic pluralism.

Poe was a genuine poet. But we cannot lose our interest in the man. He was a dark and lonely soul. Perhaps he was even as unpleasant as Briggs—"Briggs of the brandy-nose," as Poe called him—his co-proprietor of the *Broadway Journal*, says he was :

I have never met a person so utterly deficient of high motive. He cannot conceive of anybody's doing anything except for his own personal advantage; and he says, with perfect sincerity, . . . that he looks upon all reformers as madmen; and it is for this reason he is so great an egoist. He cannot conceive why the world should not feel an interest in whatever interests him, because he feels no interest himself in what does not personally concern him . . . His presumption is beyond the liveliest imagination. He has no reverence for Homer, Shakespeare, or Milton, but thinks that "Orion" is the greatest poem in the language. He has too much prudence to put his opinions into print . . . but he shows himself in his private conversation. The Bible, he says, is all rigmarole.

"A gentleman rather the worse for wear" is apt enough. Poe perished of pride as much as of drink. The key to his writings is pride, and that sexual inhibition the source of which has never been traced. Psycho-analysts may perhaps find it originating in his adolescent affection either for Mrs. Allan or for Mrs. Stannard, the mother of a schoolfellow and the original Helen. Baudelaire prayed to him as a saint, while the best of his editors, Woodberry, had to take a trip to Italy, to get rid of the taste of him.

The Channel Tunnel Project

By Brigadier-General R. G. Burton

THE project for the construction of a railroad under the English Channel to facilitate communication with France was rejected nearly fifty years ago for very sufficient reasons which are increased rather than diminished by modern developments. It is favoured now, as it was then, by interested international financiers. It was opposed in 1882 on national grounds in a public protest signed by nearly every man of eminence in this country. It was rejected again by the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1924. Why then, or rather in view of what supposed changes in the conditions of national defence, has it been revived and broadcast by a one-sided propaganda in the daily Press, from which serious arguments against the project have been carefully excluded?

The most frequent argument in favour of a tunnel, apart from the commercial aspect of the question, is that it could now be made with safety because aircraft have destroyed our insularity. That is among the most cogent reasons for opposing the project. The argument that the "conquest of the air," which is by no means complete, has destroyed our insularity is futile; a danger is not less but greater for a new and additional danger. We would not offer an enemy a bridge because he has put boats on the water. Why, having lost the safeguard of the air, should we surrender that of the sea also? An additional risk would have to be met by additional defensive measures.

One so-called "expert" has told us that the only possible enemy is France. Such a statement is absurd in view of the events of 1914. It may well be asked what would have happened in 1914 and succeeding years had a tunnel been in existence? Our Government might have been afraid to send the Expeditionary Force abroad; the Germans would have taken the Channel ports on the French side, and the enemy would have been at our gates, even if the tunnel had been demolished or rendered impassable. The defence of the ports would naturally have been regarded by the French as of less importance than the defence of Paris.

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If the Expeditionary Force had been dispatched, the Germans would undoubtedly have got between the two armies, and defeated them in detail. The enemy's first main effort would have been made with the object of separating the French and British, and their plans and concentrations would have been made accordingly. The French, again, would have withdrawn for the defence of their capital, and the British for the defence of the ports against which the first German effort would probably have been directed. The problem is not one of armies popping in and out of a tunnel, as the propagandists would have an ignorant public believe. It is a question of the grand strategy of a campaign.

It may be asked, Who are the promoters of the project, and who are its opponents, and on what grounds do they base their advocacy or opposition? The promoters are those who propose to make money by it, supported by some who have neither the knowledge nor the inclination to give more than superficial thought to it and influenced by a superficially attractive enterprise. The financiers are naturally concerned with the prospect of gain and their supporters with sentimental considerations; their opponents have no mean or personal motives for opposition; they stand on patriotic ground only, for they do not wish to see anything done that may endanger the safety of England or weaken our position in the world even in the slightest degree.

We are told that closer contact would increase and foster friendly relations with our French neighbours, a very laudable object but not based on fact. It is conceivable that it might have the opposite effect; it is doubtful whether an influx of our tourists would increase the affection of the French for our people. Continental experience shows that facilities of communication have not improved the relations between France and Italy, and France and Germany. The commercial advantages to Great Britain are equally doubtful. They are confidently claimed but never proved. One thing only is clear. A tunnel would enormously increase the numbers and expenditure of British tourists on the Continent. It is most unlikely that the expenditure of foreigners in Great Britain would increase proportionately.

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Arguments based on pacts, treaties, ententes, or the political situation of the moment are worthless, especially when we remember that responsible statesmen considered war with Germany to be "unthinkable." Political friendships are not eternal; nor, with the spectacle of Russia before us, can we count on the stability of nations or political systems. The possible danger of a Channel tunnel would come not merely from the France of today, but from a foreign invader as in 1914, from a Bolshevized Europe, or possibly from treachery within, which unfortunately is greater today than at any time in our history.

It is futile to urge that the construction of the tunnel would be useful for the relief of unemployment. Temporary relief would not justify any risk of eventual permanent disaster, which would lead to the impoverishment of our people. An argument ignored by those who favour the project is our present immunity from those responsibilities which are borne by Continental nations and have led to the institution of compulsory service. We should require additional insurance in the form of armaments, not merely in the form of protective fortifications, but of permanent additions to the fighting services. Would those who are so eager to construct a tunnel be prepared to bear the additional expense, or is it to fall on the taxpayer? Such questions require an answer.

But suppose these difficulties are overcome, the tunnel constructed, and works for its protection built, armed and equipped. There is no assurance that the mouth of the tunnel would be immune from sudden seizure. This lack of immunity would make attack more probable; the danger would be enhanced by the development of aircraft. The childish argument has been advanced by the "expert" already referred to that an enemy could not emerge from the mouth of the tunnel, even if it were in his possession, as air defence would prevent him from coming out. This presupposes the absence or inactivity of enemy aircraft, or a command of the air as complete as the command of the sea held by a predominant navy. But it is no less ridiculous to suppose, as has already been pointed out, that the question is merely one of armies popping in and out of the tunnel.

Possibilities have to be taken into consideration. In

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war it is the unexpected that happens, as was proved when Hannibal and Napoleon passed the Alps. It is possible to conceive of a situation, especially in view of scientific developments such as long-range guns, poison gas, submarines, amphibious tanks, and aircraft which descend like a bolt from the blue, which would enable an enemy to seize the outlet of the tunnel by a *coup de main*, and in the event of an unsuccessful war the tunnel might be demanded as one of the terms of peace.

We are frequently told that the tunnel could be easily destroyed or rendered incapable of use before an enemy could seize it. This is plausible in theory, but who is going to take the grave responsibility of "touching the button" to blow up the tunnel or let in the sea, and at what moment would the responsible person act? Would this be done on the first threat of danger—there might be no previous threat—or would he, backed by powerful political or financial interests, "wait and see" whether it was possible to avoid so great a catastrophe, and perhaps wait too long? If the tunnel were only temporarily put out of action, and an enemy obtained possession of it, he could presumably repair it, so it would have to be effectively destroyed by letting in the sea. At what stage of the negotiations, if there were any, or of the possible imminence of hostile action would so drastic a measure be justifiable? Hostilities have many times begun without a declaration of war, and premature action might precipitate war.

There are tunnels through the Vosges which were elaborately prepared for demolition in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, but they were never destroyed and were used by the Prussians throughout the campaign. Measures prepared for the destruction of such works are dependent on fallible human agency for their execution, and are always liable to fail at the critical moment.

It is to be hoped that the Committee of Imperial Defence will ignore interested and uninstructed agitation, and adhere to the decision arrived at five years ago. At any rate one consideration and one only should determine a decision, and that is freedom from any additional risk, however slight and remote it may seem, to the integrity of the Empire and to the maintenance inviolate of the soil of England.

Deborah

By Gordon Daviot

It was on our way home after a few days at the coast that we found it—the cottage, I mean. We had made a detour in order to inspect the new racecourse at Pont-bridge, and it was in the, to us, unexplored country between there and Dorking that we came across it. It stood on a knoll about three hundred yards outside as pretty a village as you'll find in Sussex, and it looked like a picture in a fairy-tale book. I had an impression of white lilac, and a laburnum tree at the gate.

I heard Lizbeth gasp, and she twisted in the seat at my side and craned her neck till she couldn't see it any more. We were in the village street before she suggested going back for a closer inspection, and I had to point out that we were late as it was. I have never really liked driving in the dark since I used to skate round shell holes on two wheels with intermittent illumination on the Bethune road.

"Besides," I said, "the board you're talking about probably reads 'W. Higson, Sweep,' and has nothing to do with letting the place."

She said, "All right, George, I expect you do need dinner rather badly. Did you notice the lilacs?"

We were nearly home before she spoke again. "There was an illustration in my Grimm like that. Hansel and Gretel, I think it was." And at dinner, apropos apparently of bottled peas, she said, "There were little crooked apple-trees at the side."

At intervals through the week I remembered the place—or rather I had occasional pictures of it at the back of my mind when I was thinking of totally different matters—and yet when Lizbeth said next Saturday morning at breakfast, "We are going to start early today and go round by that cottage," something made me say, "What cottage?"

"You know," she said. And I had a queer feeling of being found out.

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When we pulled up at the little green gate in the hedge, Lizbeth clicked her tongue the way she always does when she has scored off me, for the notice-board, planted drunkenly at one corner of the garden, read "To Let." There the information ended. There was no "Apply to" or "at." We went back to the village and in a thatched post office got the information we wanted. The cottage was most certainly to let and the key was to be had at Halkett's. Halkett's was the farm on the slope behind the cottage. The cottage had belonged to an old woman, a childless widow. She had died about eight years ago come June. The present owner was a grandnephew of the old woman, who lived in New Zealand and had never seen the place. He was sort of sentimental about the cottage, though, and wouldn't sell it. It was only to let, and the Halketts looked after it.

We took ourselves to Halkett's, where a large damsel in blue gingham, her enormous arms bare to the elbow and still damp, announced that she would "fetch Miss Halkett to us," and clattered down the cool tiled passage with the threat still on her lips.

Miss Halkett proved to be a replica of her maid, perhaps a pound or two less, and a shade lighter on her feet—a pleasant practical girl. She fetched the key and accompanied us down the field path to the cottage. We should have preferred to explore it alone, but could not very well refuse her chaperonage. She preceded us into the living-room and drew aside the curtains that hung across the latticed windows.

"Why," said Lizbeth, "it's furnished!"

"Yes, the nephew I was telling you of said that it was to stay just the way it was when old Deborah died and tenants were to be taken only on that condition. We look after it when it isn't let."

In spite of the emptiness of the wide hearth the room had a pleasant look, very welcoming. It was, moreover, an authentic cottage interior. There were no Liberty cretonnes, no rush mats, no colour scheme. The curtains, as Lizbeth remarked afterwards, were made of flowered chintz at a few pence a yard, and the possibly valuable bits of china on the mantelpiece were cheek by jowl with the kind of tea-caddy a grocer gives away at Christmas

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and souvenirs of half a dozen watering-places. Nothing in the room had been placed there for its effect. Each article was there because of its value to the owner. And yet in spite of that—or perhaps because of it—the room had a charm that no arranged room in my experience ever had. And the rest of the house was the same.

We moved out of doors and stood looking at the place in a sort of speechless satisfaction. On one side the garden was bounded by a row of white lilac trees, heavy with bloom. At the back, rather close to the house, were aspen poplars—the kind that make a sound like rain when the lightest wind comes—and on the grass at the other side were Lizbeth's crooked little apple-trees. By the road ran a very low hedge of box. A narrow brick path went up to the door, but not round the house. There was no back door, and the grass, unbroken by any flower-beds, grew close up to the walls. It was no show place, inside or out, but it had a most definite charm. All buildings have an atmosphere of some kind or other. "Laburnum Cottage"—for that was its prosaic name—had an air of primness. It wasn't smug—not even complacent. But there was a happy well-orderedness about it. It both deprecated and disowned the tipsy notice-board. The unmown grass had the incongruous effect of dishevelled hair on a carefully dressed woman. And yet it wasn't in its physical peculiarities that the primness lay. You can get an ordered effect with poplars or cypress or trimmed box. But lilacs are not exactly prim, and the laburnum at the gate was positively wanton. The primness hung in the atmosphere itself, somehow.

As we came back to the living-room Lizbeth said, "You keep it beautifully, Miss Halkett. We shall have something to live up to."

Facial expression is the subtlest thing on earth. What is the difference between a pleased blush and an uncomfortable flush? Something too indefinite for words, isn't it?—and yet as definite as daylight. It was certainly an uncomfortable flush that showed in Miss Halkett's honest visage at the moment, and she turned with obvious relief to follow Lizbeth, who had been examining a piece of lustre ware, to a second inspection of the kitchen.

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Now, why?

We left the place some ten minutes later its accepted tenants, and Lizbeth's parting words to Miss Halkett were, "And do take down the board at once, won't you? It's a—a blot!"

All the way to the coast she was jubilant, the burden of her song being "that it should be our luck to get it, when country cottages were at a premium."

"Perhaps there is a snag somewhere," I suggested. "Don't let's crow too soon."

"George! You unbearable wet blanket!" she said. "I won't be damped by you. I just won't. If you want to be liverish on a glorious spring morning on your way to the sea through a country reeking of lilac, you'll have to do it without my hitherto unfailing sympathy."

And certainly it would be difficult to find a snag in the perfect days we spent at the cottage. We would let the Halketts know when we were coming down and they had the place open, clean, and aired for us. They supplied us with milk, butter and eggs, chickens, ducks, and salads. The weather all the summer was the kind that leaves one in no doubt. We spent the long brilliant days in the garden on the little patch of shaved turf, I working in a deck chair, Lizbeth supine in a hammock slung from the lilac trees. Little flaws of wind ran in a whispering patter through the aspen poplars and ceased abruptly as if afraid of being overheard. Our flowered chintz flapped lazily at the yawning windows. Over the tops of the trees across the road the blue Sussex distances shimmered in the sun. In July, when London was a blazing furnace, we migrated altogether to Laburnum Cottage. It was then that the change in Lizbeth began. She grew listless and nervy. I blamed the long heat wave and wished that I could take her for a sea voyage, but a country cottage was the best we could do. She woke to animation sometimes when Mary Halkett would look in in passing, and would discuss with every appearance of interest our predecessors in the rôle of tenant, especially the former owner. I had the impression that the Halkett girl was not quite at her ease at these moments, and I wondered which of the tenants had been the undesirable one. But she was frank enough and

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showed no disposition to avoid us. She remembered old Mrs. Margetts only vaguely, but such recollection as she had was evidently pleasant.

"Everyone liked her," she said. "She was a sweet old woman."

"Was she house-proud?" asked Lizbeth surprisingly.

"She was awfully fond of her cottage, if that's what you mean."

Later on Lizbeth said, "How is it that none of the other tenants wanted to hang on to a little heaven like this?" It was a question we had often asked each other, and we both turned to our visitor. On Mary Halkett's face was the expression of one who sees a step just in time. It was gone even as I turned and she said evenly:

"Well, it's a very lonely spot, and once summer's gone, not so very attractive. Most of the tenants were the kind who like to go to a different place every year."

Which seemed a reasonable enough explanation.

But when we were left alone again, Lizbeth would sink back to her strange rapt listlessness. And she grew more and more queer in her fads. She gave up the hammock because it "didn't belong" apparently, was "out of the picture," and took to sitting at the door in a hard wooden chair with a thin turkey-red cushion as the only mitigant of its penitential qualities.

And then one evening at the end of July, after a grey, dusty day, sultry and full of the promise of storm, we arrived back from a short walk along the parched lanes. Lizbeth had gone in front of me through the open door and was standing apparently gazing down at the table where the evening meal was set.

"Oh, I don't *like* it!" she said suddenly with such passion that it took my breath away.

The chicken salad on the table was one of her favourite dishes, but the best course was to humour her, I thought.

"There's some cold beef in the larder," I said. "Shall I get you that?"

To my surprise she turned with a little shaky laugh.

"You prosaic darling!" she said. Then her smile died away. She came close up to me and peered half-searchingly, half-confidingly into my face. "Have you never noticed the queer thing about the house?" And

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as I struggled for words in my astonishment, she added, "No, I suppose a man wouldn't notice. Well, look at the room. There has been a wind all day and clouds of dust have been drifting over the garden. The doors and the windows have been open since morning, and *there isn't a speck of dust in the room!* And it's *always* like that!" Her voice rose hysterically. "No dust anywhere!"

It sounded perilously like an anticlimax to her dramatic question. But less so when I searched round in my brain for an explanation that might meet the situation. There didn't seem to be one at hand somehow. And the longer I searched, the more at sea I became. To my unbounded relief, however, Lizbeth lapsed suddenly from the borders of hysteria to her normal calm. She sat down at the table and began to serve, and I followed her example. It was rather a silent meal.

"You know," I said at last, "there must be a perfectly ordinary explanation. A draught that acts as a vacuum cleaner, or something of that sort. Some quite reasonable explanation."

She was silent, crumbling her bread. Then she said rather absently, "Oh, perfectly reasonable!"

But I had a feeling that she did not mean exactly what I did. We dropped the subject. And next morning the weather broke and we went back to town.

For a month I was so busy that we had no chance of getting away even at the week-ends. And then, quite unexpectedly, I had a free Saturday and Sunday. It was hot and very much the fag-end of August in town, and I tentatively suggested the cottage. To my surprise Lizbeth, who had quite recovered her good spirits, seemed not only willing, but glad. I heard her humming as we packed, and I called through to her, "There won't be time to let the Halketts know, but I don't expect we shall starve."

It wasn't a pleasant journey down. The whole countryside was crying aloud for water, the wind was blustering, and pillars of dust that looked as high as the Nelson monument would rise in front of us and just as we reached their base would, deliberately it seemed, collapse on us. The hedge and the trees outside Laburnum Cottage were

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grey with dust and the grass looked shabby. Lizbeth went up to Halkett's for the key while I tinkered with the engine before consigning it to the mercies of the garage-late-blacksmith in the village.

"There was no one to be seen at Halkett's," she said when she came back, "so I just took the key off the nail."

I joined her at the door and went into the living-room with her.

Do you know the feeling you have sometimes on entering a room that it has just that moment been vacated? You didn't see or hear a door closing, but you have the impression that someone went out as you came in. Well, there wasn't another door to the living-room at Laburnum Cottage, but I most distinctly had the feeling.

Lizbeth was examining the shining spick-and-span room with interest.

"I just wanted to be sure," she said inconsequently.

"The Halketts must have cleaned up on the chance of our coming," I said, ignoring her remark and its possible application.

"No," she said. Just like that. As if she knew all about it.

"Look here," I said, exasperated, "come up to Halkett's with me. I'll lay you fifty to one in pounds that they have been here either today or yesterday."

"All right," she said.

We walked up to the farm in silence, I feeling ridiculous and rather angry, Lizbeth apparently serene. We met Mary Halkett by the barn. If one glance at her face was enough for us, I think her glance at us must have been equally enlightening.

"You didn't expect us?" said Lizbeth. I have never heard a more conventional question. It had the unaccented tone of one discussing the weather.

"No," said Miss Halkett. "No, or I'd have—No——"

"It doesn't matter," said Lizbeth. "We're not staying. We looked in on our way to Bognor to collect some things. We're leaving the cottage to Deborah."

Mary Halkett put down the can she was carrying, as if suddenly incapable of bearing its weight. "Oh, I'm so sorry!" she cried. "So sorry! You've been the

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nicest people we've ever—— You liked the place so much that I thought she might—— But I was afraid back in July that you'd noticed. And she wouldn't let up. You're not angry, are you? There's no harm in the cottage. Only the—the queerness."

"No," said Lizbeth, still in the same serene way. "Not a bit angry. For myself I'm rather glad to have known the place. And you see, I have a sympathy with Deborah. I'm awfully attached to sticks and stones myself. We'd be quite happy to think that Deborah had the cottage all to herself until the end of our lease. Wouldn't we, George?"

"Yes," I said, making with difficulty my sole contribution to this incredible conversation.

Miss Halkett then offered us something to eat at the farm, which we refused. But we each had a glass of milk—just to show that there was no ill-will, as Lizbeth said afterwards.

I drove down to Bognor in a dazed condition. As we sighted the sea, Lizbeth seemed to wake up from a trance. She gave a little amused snort and said, "Isn't it ludicrous that in these days of shortage of labour we refuse to have anything to do with a cottage that dusts itself!"

It is ludicrous, isn't it? But we are going down to the coast next week-end. And I owe Lizbeth a cool fifty, which I'm hoping she won't remember. And worst of all, something I don't understand keeps me from saying, "I told you so!"

Our Lady of Coutances

By Rev. Jocelyn Perkins, D.C.L.

FROM whatever point of the compass one approaches the lordly city of Coutances the effect is magnificent. That glorious cluster of towers and spires, with the octagon of the cathedral, and its Renaissance descendant at St. Pierre, rising above the steep hill and visible for many a mile out to sea, once beheld can never be forgotten.

Coutances, like Rouen and other Norman cathedrals, is closely linked with the story of our own country. Her bishop, the celebrated Geoffroi de Montbray, stood in Westminster Abbey on that eventful Christmas Day in the year of grace 1066, side by side with Ealdred, Archbishop of York, and presented the Conqueror to his new subjects. Afterwards the bishop returned to his Norman diocese and busily occupied himself with the erection of the Romanesque cathedral, parts of which still remain and can be seen, if you know where to look for them.

For many centuries, too, did the bishops of Coutances exercise spiritual jurisdiction over the Church in the Channel Islands. They could see Jersey, opal-like in the midst of the ocean, from their cathedral tower. There is plenty of evidence to show that they performed their duties very efficiently. Certainly they compared, by no means unfavourably, with the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century bishops of Winchester, whose conception of their responsibilities to the Channel Islanders was one of impartial neglect! The Bishop of Coutances did not receive his final dismissal until well on into the reign of Elizabeth, and it is at least conceivable that this anomalous, but interesting arrangement might have continued still longer, had it not been for a certain tiresome and bellicose Dean of Guernsey.

The great charm of Coutances Cathedral lies in the fact that it is absolutely devoid of any flamboyant or Renaissance influence whatsoever. As you wander

OUR LADY OF COUTANCES

through its aisles, you realize that you are in the presence of pure, unalloyed thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Gothic. The noble church grows upon you more and more every hour you spend within its walls. Its beauties are manifold, especially the graceful and ingenious manner in which the various chapels of the nave are separated from one another. This feature alone is sufficient to confer a unique distinction upon the mother church of the Cotentin peninsula.

Coutances Cathedral once provided a notable battleground for rival schools of archæologists. There were some who stoutly maintained that it had come into existence, then and there; just as we see it today, one hundred and fifty years before any other Gothic building in France, like Minerva issuing fully armed from the brain of Jove! Any amount of words were used and any amount of ink was spilt, for the matter was only finally cleared up about fifty years ago. Why in the world people could not have taken the trouble in the absence of documents to make a careful examination of the inner works of the building is a puzzle. As soon as the subject came to be dealt with on really scientific lines, the mystery was quickly solved, for there were revealed immense traces of the Romanesque cathedral of Geoffroi de Montbray inside the towers and behind the triforium of the nave. When the thirteenth-century people made their appearance upon the scene, they had evidently allowed the main body of the Romanesque nave to remain standing, but subjected it to an extensive process of adaptation. The reconstruction which the building then underwent was as drastic as that which the old Norman cathedral of Winchester received from the Perpendicular builders several generations later.

The cathedral suffered terribly at the hands both of the Huguenot and the revolutionary. It still preserves a quantity of its glorious medieval glass, and the high altar, though not of any great beauty, is believed to be of pre-Revolution date; but with these exceptions, fittings, furniture, and the instrumenta of worship generally have disappeared altogether. The insignificant pulpit and uninteresting modern stalls tell the melancholy tale only too well.

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Once upon a time a noble rood-screen stood here. It perished during the frightful outburst of bad taste during the reign of Louis XV. It was replaced by an iron grille. Pictures are still in existence in the local Musée and elsewhere in which the grille is indicated, and the effect must have been by no means unpleasing. Unfortunately, the late bishop, Monseigneur Guérin, a prelate who did an immense amount for this cathedral and displayed an almost medieval generosity, thought right to remove the iron grille, lock, stock, and barrel. What was still worse, he remodelled the choir altogether, a bay further to the east, thus making an absolute break with the old traditions.

Unlike the majority of its French sisters, there is no parish attached to Coutances Cathedral. It was, and still is, purely diocesan. The spiritual oversight of the inhabitants is carried out by the clergy of the two noble churches of St. Pierre and St. Nicholas.

The capitular offices on Sunday are rendered with much dignity, and it is a real pleasure to worship with our French brethren in such glorious surroundings. The hotel accommodation of the place leaves, however, a good deal to be desired, and the attractions of a week-end at Coutances are necessarily somewhat modified by the fact. Still, the little city is so interesting and its mother church so overwhelmingly splendid as to outweigh any amount of personal discomfort. If people will not take the trouble to spend at least twenty-four hours in this wonderful old place, they will not deserve to go abroad again.

The Pelandok and the Crocodile

A Malay Folk Tale

By C. G. Joiner

THIS is a tale of Pelandok the Mouse-deer, whom men call *Chi Salem di Rimba*, which is "Sir Peace-of-the-Forest," because he is so full of counsel and devices that all the animals bring their disputes and quarrels to him to judge and decide.

Once Sir Peace-of-the-Forest was going from Bentong to Kuala Sol to hear a case between a tiger and one of his own kinsmen who dwelt in the *bluker* of Kuala Sol, but when he came to the Blat river, it was full of crocodiles waiting for him, both upstream and down, at every place where he might cross.

So Sir Peace-of-the-Forest went downstream till he came to the wallow of the Crocodile Raja.

"Peace to you, Raja Buaia," says he.

"And to you peace," says Buaia the Crocodile.

And they talked together as friends for a while, for Pelandok remembered the *pantun* which says :

The leaves are green, the flowers white,
And the sun is the Lord of Day;
Unless the net be cast aright,
Your fish will swim away.

Then he said :

"Tell me now, Raja Buaia, for I have often wondered, are there more crocodiles in the world than mouse-deer, or more mouse-deer than crocodiles?"

"More crocodiles assuredly," said Buaia, "for in this river alone, which is but a little river, there are a thousand crocodiles."

"A thousand?" said Sir Peace-of-the-Forest. "Nay, Raja, thy people are many and my people are many, but a thousand crocodiles!"

"Do you doubt my word, presumptuous hoof-drummer?"

"Nay, Raja, and Allah forbid it, Raja! But a thousand crocodiles is very many crocodiles!"

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Then was Buaia the Crocodile very angry, and he beat upon the water with his tail to summon his people.

And they came hurrying from far and near, from upstream and downstream, and some clambering laboriously along the banks because there was no room for them in the waters; big crocodiles and little crocodiles, young and old, male and female; so far as the eye could see, in each direction, the Blat river was cluttered with crocodiles.

And Buaia said: "Sir Pelandok, behold my people!"

And he said: "I see them."

And Buaia said: "Count them, Sir Pelandok."

But Pelandok said: "Oh, Raja Buaia, a man has ten fingers, and you have eight, but how shall I number this multitude on my hooves? Bid them range themselves in rows—here a crocodile, and there a crocodile, and a crocodile next to him, and when they shall come to the other bank, let them make another row behind the first, ranging themselves in rows and in companies, that I may count them."

And Buaia the Crocodile smiled, for he knew the number of his people, and he said: "This is a little thing."

And he called to the crocodiles and bade them range themselves in rows. And it was done.

Then Pelandok, the mouse-deer (whom men call Sir Peace-of-the-Forest), leapt upon the back of the first crocodile—tap!

"*Sa*," said he, and tapped with his hooves; "*Dua*," as he leapt on to the second, and so, "Three"—tap—"Four"—tap—he called, till he came to the other side, and then he stood for a space and looked at the crocodiles, while Buaia waited a little impatiently for him to return along the next row.

But Sir Peace-of-the-Forest said:

"Oh, Raja Buaia, the crocodile has a long tail, but it is very much better to have a long mind."

And with that—tip-tap!—and he was gone into the forest.

But what Raja Buaia said to the other crocodiles is better imagined than told!

When the Sea Gives Up Its Dead

By John Nelson

WHEN the last Great Trump is sounded,
And the dead of ages rise
To gather round the Judgment Seat
And face the Last Assize,
All sons of earth will not be there,
All that she bore and bred—
The muster roll will not be called
Till the sea gives up its dead.

The captains and the seamen
Who were sepulchred in clay
Will tell the wondering landmen
The cause of the delay :
They'll know that nothing can be done,
Indictments can't be read,
Until their missing comrades come,
And the sea gives up its dead.

And kings and queens and emperors
Who walked the earth in pride
Will have to wait in silence there
The Judgment Seat beside,
Until the seamen gather
And, by their captains led,
Roll up in answer to the call
When the sea gives up its dead.

If any shreds of human pride
Are left on that Great Day,
When worldly pomps and vanities
Like smoke have rolled away,

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They'll cling to drowned land folk
Who, from a tide-washed bed,
Come marching with the sailormen,
When the sea gives up its dead.

Change

By Geoffrey Johnson

IN waistcoat brown and yellow
A thrush upon a tree
Is gale-swung o'er the winter-flooded copse,
A whistling look-out fellow
With coat-tails flapping free
Right in the perilous mizzen-tops;
Yet surely, surely, with prophetic eyes
The fabulous verge of Spring-land he descries.

By such strange impulse bidden
Boys know the hour of tops;
The secret spinning in the wheels of Time
From us is not more hidden.
Whips come, the marble drops
Like kingdoms or a closing rhyme.
Birdhood and boyhood hold the secret dear
Of running through the ages in a year.

Thrush, with your music griefless,
But yesterday you sang
To grave, hard Romans of a Spring not far,
Though Tiber's vines were leafless.
Boy, with your top and slang,
You are the very rogue, you are,
Who shouted, whipped, and cocked a saucy nose
Even in grim Neronian porticoes.

"Says Sergeant Murphy"

By A. P. Garland

THE DEATH OF DORA

"I SEE that Dora is dead," remarked Mr. Heddle.

"Dora who?" asked Sergeant Murphy.

"Oh, you know what I mean," said Mr. Heddle with a laugh. "That Defence of the Realm business."

"Oh, *the* Dora, you mean. And who says she's dead?"

"The Home Secretary," was the reply.

"Oh, he says so, does he? He ought to know. Well, I'll bet he stood by the bedside givin' the patient oxygen, and every other head of a Government department was with him. And the cortège in the funeral must have taken two hours to pass a given point in Whitehall," said the Sergeant grimly.

"But it's all eyewash, Heddle," he went on. "Dora isn't merely a set of regulations tellin' you it's high treason to buy thripe after a certain hour, or that the end of the Empire is signalled the day an off-licence sells less than a pint of brandy at a time. Dora is simply an idea that is imbedded in the heads of a number of people that they've a heaven-sint mission to regulate other people's lives. Dora is a principle. She'll outlast the Pyramids.

"Take the Rye Fund, for example. You know how you and I sint a little bit along for the dependents of the poor fellahs that were dhrowned in the lifeboat disaster. Did we attach anny sthring to our subscriptions? You know we didn't. We just said, 'Here's the money. Do the best you can for yourselves with it and good luck to you.'

"But Dora was on the look-out, and in the best of health as usual. Says Dora, 'That's an awful lot of money, and thim people, being just cottagers, don't know what's best for thim, the way a mayor or a committee does. It 'ud be a crime to see ignorant people like that spindin' the money on suits of mournin' or maybe a wireless set. So we'll have a look round and see what good causes we can support with the funds, and thin dole out the balance to the widows and orphans. And to

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Hades with the subscribers! They've given nothin' but the money. Who are they annyhow?'

"That's Dora at her best. Ask her is she her brother's keeper and she'll answer, 'I'm all that and I'm keepin' him toein' the line. It's all for his good.'

"Me attintion, Heddle, was first dhrawn to the gifted lady whin we were on the Somme in the winter of 1916. You remimber what the thrinches were like around Thiepval. Well, wan day in a dugout—it had been sleetin' steadily for eighteen hours—I read in a paper that Dora had fought like wan man to stop the rum issue to throops in the line. That was wan of the few defeats she has suffered in a long fightin' career.

"But look at her victories, Heddle. She has fixed the closin' time of shops to suit the inconvenience of the public. She has made it an offince for a man to sind his small boy to a shop for a packet of cigarettes. Why shouldn't the man go himself, broken leg or not? In some towns, on Sundays, she has closed cinemas, stopped thram cars from runnin', and debarred the public from indulgin' in the riochous game of puttin' on the municipal greens.

"She has kept childhren on the pavemint outside public-houses so that the rain might help thim to grow. She has enabled sthreet bookmakers to join the super-tax class without payin' sixpence to the Revenue. She has made the 'Come to Britain' movemint wan of the great big laughs of the day, except in the case of the crowd of underworld aliens that ran the night clubs around Shaftesbury Avenue. She has fixed things so that in some sthreeets good min and thrue can dhrink up till ten o'clock and thin cross the road and pursoo their hobby till eleven. That isn't half what she's done."

"But the Dora people say they're thinkin' of the long hours shop assistants have to work," remarked Heddle.

"They are not," was the reply. "Did you ever know thim to worry about the starvation wages some of thim shop assistants get? Not likely. All they want to do is to intherfere with other people's habits and make things unpleasant.

"No, Heddle. I'll believe Dora is dead whin I'm told that's the verdict of the ante-mortem they've held on her."

Actions and Reactions in Drama

By Horace Shipp

Caste. By Tom Robertson. (The Old Vic.)

Thérèse Raquin. By Emile Zola. (Court.)

The Mock Emperor. By Luigi Pirandello. (Queen's.)

Beau Geste. By Basil Dean and Charlton Mann. (His Majesty's.)

THE revival of *Caste* as a centenary gesture by the Old Vic, and the production of *Thérèse Raquin* at the Court Theatre remind us of the parts these plays have taken in the history of the theatre advancing. Robertson, for all that we now laugh at his Victorianism and an air of Dundreariness in his work, was a pioneer of realism at a time when the English theatre was apparently almost past praying for. *Society*, his first play of what we might call neo-naturalism, was dismissed as rubbish until Marie Wilton took it with the comment: "It is better to be dangerous than dull." Its immediate success was followed by the writing of *Ours*, and then came *Caste*, which artistically was the best thing Robertson did. Today it is interesting as a museum piece; in its own day it was a daring advance upon the chaos and the night of the mid-nineteenth-century theatre.

That advance took a definite plunge forward when the realists of fifteen or twenty years later revolted against the Robertson type of play with the new realism they had learned from Ibsen and from the French realists under the banner of Zola. Zola's own *Thérèse Raquin* was one of the earliest plays to be produced at the Théâtre Libre, which gave definite form to the new movement in France, and was the second production of Mr. Grein's Independent Theatre, which did a like service for the English stage. How great an advance it was may be judged by anybody who has taken the opportunity of the two revivals to compare the plays. *Thérèse Raquin* is not a museum piece; it still stands on its own feet, poised there, be it admitted, a little theatrically, with a stagy boldness of gesture and speech not permitted to-day to the dramatist of the absent fourth wall. As such, it gives a fine chance

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for the direct acting of the romantic school, and at the Court Theatre Nancy Price as Madame Raquin and Russell Thorndike as the alluring Laurent were the right people to interpret it. Mr. Frank Birch's production, which is often so good, tended to fear to give the play its full flavour, and it was perhaps this fact which brought it nearer the domestic drama of our own day than to its own 1880 period.

From these milestones of theatrical progress one may look at the contemporary theatre. In my last notes I was able to draw attention to two plays which have earned box-office success by sheer excellence. *Journey's End* and *The Lady with a Lamp* have to be seen by anyone who takes the theatre seriously; and the same is to be said of Mr. Ernest Milton's production of Pirandello's *The Mock Emperor*. As drama, as acting, as production, it is splendid stuff. When you are away from the theatre, you may tease yourself, if you are a metaphysical sort of person, with Pirandello's implications of a study in alienism; but in the theatre you will find it difficult to think of anything but the moving tragedy of this lonely man who has been thrust out of normal life and chosen to remain outside, of the comedy of the modern doctor with his psycho-analytic bag of tricks, of the swiftly-moving drama of love, hate, and revenge. As a word of warning, and of reproof to Signor Pirandello, one need not pay much attention to the first act efforts to place the story of Henry IV. The brief note on the programme tells you all you need to know, and once the tragic and exciting story of Henry's impersonator gets moving, you will not bother nor be bothered concerning the relations of Henry with Pope Gregory VII. Terror and pity and the laughter of genuine comedy are the elements of the play and the beauty which comes of these. That the story beneath its closely-woven surface action and interest has deep after deep of philosophic and metaphysical meaning need no more disturb one than that *Macbeth* is a disquisition upon predestination and freewill. These additions are for reflection; in the theatre the play is most emphatically the thing. Mr. Ernest Milton's acting in this drama is a joy. An actor not made for all parts and because of a certain fulsomeness about his work often seeming a little

ACTIONS AND REACTIONS IN DRAMA

difficult to fit into the contemporary theatre, Mr. Milton can give of his best in parts which demand a wide orchestration of mood and manner; and Henry IV is ideal for him. The rest of his cast seem naturally subdued beside that fever of personality, but the play is written thus, and the emphasis is right. Mr. Brember Wills' excellent study of the doctor in its comedy vein stands up to his tragic Henry. The writing of the play is scarcely fair to the other characters, and Miss Dorothy Dix puts in some fine work which is likely to be overlooked.

If in his own line Pirandello has carried the theatre another step along the spiral way of its inevitable evolution so that one leaves the performance thrilled by a work of art, what shall we say of the use of the theatre for such work as the dramatization of *Beau Geste*? London's finest theatre, London's most prominent producer, a vast cast, a lavish production of many scenes—all these elements deliberately playing down to what is regarded as the mentality of the man in the street; and the result is sentimental twaddle and cheap theatricalism which is the twentieth-century equivalent of that staginess against which Robertson, Zola, Ibsen, Hauptmann, Tchekov, Galsworthy, Shaw, and Pirandello, to name but a few, have revolted in the name of common sense. Whatever conviction there is about this diamond stealing and French Foreign Legion mixture in Mr. Wren's book, there is none in the play. Its "stout fella" schoolboy philosophy and its strain of romanticism are housemaid's mental pabulum, as loose in thinking as its story is in construction. The ideals of loyalty and a certain steadfastness which do give the play a legitimate appeal are vitiated by this incapacity to think straightly or soundly. The stuff was too much for the actors, however much they tried; and it was too much for Mr. Dean as producer, who gave us a very good rough-and-tumble fight in one scene, but otherwise was most pedestrian. His barrack room was ludicrously neat and tidy; he seemed to be glancing yearningly towards musical comedy half the time. But why do it at all? *Why* do it at all?

Books

SIDELIGHTS ON MEN OF LETTERS

CHARLES DICKENS AS A LEGAL HISTORIAN. By WILLIAM S. HOLDSWORTH, K.C., D.C.L. New Haven: Yale University Press. London: H. Milford. 9s.

It is very satisfactory to have four lectures from an authority who can quote his own "History of English Law" on Dickens's exposition of the subject. The lectures were given before the Law School of Yale and might have been enlarged as a book; but they give us a good deal of expert information about the Courts of earlier days, and in particular about the Court of Chancery, exposed at full length in "Bleak House," and the Common Law action in "Pickwick." Dickens was hardly a "legal historian," but he was certainly an acute critic of the law, with experience in the offices of two attorneys, and he evidently enjoyed the delineation of legal types. He was not the only novelist to do this, for it is easy to recall those notable figures, Mr. Furnival and Mr. Chaffanbrass, arguing for Lady Mason in "Orley Farm." But Dickens's attacks were singularly outspoken, and if some of the legal detail of "Bleak House" belongs to an earlier period than the date of the book, Dr. Holdsworth does not attempt to defend the bad old system. It was "almost incredibly dilatory," as the result of slackness and deliberate money-making by the multiplication of useless and repetitive procedure. The law is the most strongly entrenched of the professions and the last to reform itself. It has a vile record of inhumanity which the general reader of today cannot realize. Dr. Holdsworth has not gone back far enough to get the shocking case of Mary Jones, which Dickens, prompted probably by Forster, cited in "Barnaby Rudge," chapter 37. Forster notes that there was a man in Parliament bold enough to protest against a system which, after reducing a wife of nineteen to beggary by pressing her husband to sea, sentenced her to death for entering a draper's shop, taking some coarse linen off the counter, and laying it down again as the shopman gazed at her. Her defence was that, since her husband had been stolen from her, she had no bed to lie on, nothing to clothe her children with, nothing to give them to eat, and "perhaps she might have done something wrong, for she hardly knew what she did." She was sent to Tyburn with her infant at her breast, one of a huge crowd of victims. Even the flippant Horace Walpole called the country at this time "a shambles." Popular historians, though pretending nowadays to be more concerned with the people of England, do not mention these things. From 1810 to 1845 upwards of 1,400 persons suffered death for crimes which

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have since ceased to be capital. Some legal relief was given to insolvent debtors in the early years of the nineteenth century, and as many as 50,000 were released from prison before 1840. But the Marshalsea, not given up till 1849, and the Fleet, demolished in 1846, continued, as we know from Dickens, to claim their wretched lodgers. Doctors' Commons was destroyed in 1867, but the "low archway" Dickens mentions at the entrance survived a few years longer, and the pleasant arrangements of ecclesiastical law are not yet obsolete.

A note at the end shows up an evident error in *Bardell v. Pickwick*. One may ask whether it was a serious presentation of the law at all. Mrs. Bardell, so far as the text informs us, had put forward no definite claim, and Mr. Pickwick had made no refusal to accept the claim. Would not Mr. Winkle's name as a witness have been ascertained by an official of the court, not Mr. Buzfuz? The action by Norton against Lord Melbourne is mentioned as a case in which much was made of trivial letters like Mr. Pickwick's about "chops and tomata [*sic*] sauce." Dickens later regretted he had missed the then current description of the tomato as a "love-apple." The "casa" of chapter 39 is, I suppose, short for the *capias ad satisfaciendum* Dr. Holdsworth mentions. Mr. Peter Magnus's playful signature of "afternoon" for p.m. is ascribed to a legal jest about *Noon* Talfourd. Scott, however, had made a similar jest in "St. Ronan's Well," where P. S. Touchwood explains that he was called "Postcript Touchwood." It was in accordance with the law of the time that neither the plaintiff nor the defendant could give evidence. The fact is that the Chancery and Common Law sides were both clogged with obsolete procedure, and, till the Courts of Law were erected in the Strand, dirty, low-roofed buildings all over London were used.

Some vivid pictures from Dickens are given, including a view of Stryver. According to Edmund Yates, he was founded on a single unconscious sitting Edwin James, Q.C., "a fat, florid man with a large, hard face," gave to Dickens. The imp of an office-boy in "Bleak House," Smallweed, was reported to be the son of John Doe and "the only female member of the Roe family." So the fictitious legal pair might have been explained. Mr. Bumble is reported as calling the law "an ass"; quoters usually make it "a hass." Both renderings are wrong.

V. R.

JOHNSON AND BOSWELL REVISED BY THEMSELVES AND OTHERS. Three Essays by D. NICHOL SMITH, R. W. CHAPMAN, and L. F. POWELL. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 6s.

THE three papers reprinted in this little book are of great interest to the Johnsonian. Mr. Nichol Smith shows that

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Johnson took more pains to revise his printed work than is realized. Authors are not generally communicative on such points, and may even like the public to believe that the labour of composition is small. Johnson followed the sound principle of putting his work right, when it had been hasty, revising his "Rasselas" and "Idler." Mr. R. W. Chapman shows from the unique collection of proofs in the possession of Mr. R. B. Adam how careful Boswell was to revise the great biography, pausing over a phrase or a press-reader's query. In the third paper Mr. L. F. Powell explains the principles of his revision of Birkbeck Hill's standard Boswell. All is evidently being done with the thorough care and research this magnificent monument deserves.

MEMOIRS

SEEN IN PASSING. By FRANCIS GRIBBLE. Benn. 10s. 6d.

MR. GRIBBLE is an old hand with a pen, and his reminiscences are excellently told, full of humour and shrewd judgment. He begins in his native Devon and passes from schooldays to engaging views of Oxford in the eighties, with its dons, young poets, and orators at the Union. The description of the various things meant by Bywater's "Yes" is quite amusing. Curzon is among the orators, full of ambition and confidence, and his later arrogance is well illustrated by some good stories. David Anderson's "School of Journalism," where the author paid a premium of 100 guineas, was limited in its instruction, but he did get out of it the offer of a post in Yokohama. Health stopped the idea, and Mr. Gribble remained to give us many vivid views of the men of the nineties, especially Phil May, the cheeriest and most casual of Bohemians. The brilliant Traill is now unduly forgotten. Joseph Knight, we learn, lent his opera-glasses to Morley, who pawned them! Morley soon, as Mr. Gribble says, rose to success, if money means that; but, more cautious than generous, he never gained the wide affection that was Knight's. The impression of Henley, though the author never met him, is just, but we doubt if any of his "young men" were spoilt by copying his affectations of style. They sloughed them after a while, and their success or failure was a matter of compromising between what the public want and their own artistic desires—a dilemma Mr. Gribble thoroughly appreciates. Happy, commercially, was Garvice, who could believe in his own sentimental stuff and so write it with conviction. The book ends with some striking views of internment at Rubleben, and is good reading throughout for those who know the past in literature and journalism.



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THE ENGLISH REVIEW

THE FARINGTON DIARY. Edited by JAMES GREIG. Vol. VIII (1815-21).
Hutchinson. 21s.

MR. GREIG tells us in his preface that the "Diary" was bought at auction for 110 guineas. It was certainly a good bargain, for the indefatigable author, apart from his special interest in painters and the Academy, puts down odd little details of his own which would not occur to anybody else—such as the effect of wine on long life. Napoleon, of course, is prominent, and there is a dramatic little note about his being sighted by Wellington at Waterloo. Various English royalties come in by way of Sir Thomas Lawrence. Turner, the most famous painter of the period, figures as a man determined to be paid as much as possible for his work. The *Quarterly Review* is said to have brought Murray £2,500 a year; Jeffrey, of the *Edinburgh*, is mentioned several times, always with a misspelt name. One of Boswell's sons, James, is seen wishing to annotate his father's great "Life of Johnson," but unwilling that an outsider should get any credit for such work. The other son, Alexander, whose rise to a baronet is noted at the end, was soon to be killed in a duel due to his offensive writing. Farington seems to have had no great opinion of Scott the poet, and it is odd that, as he met the Scottish publisher Cadell, and talks of Miss Edgeworth and Lady Caroline Lamb's novel about Byron, he noted nothing about the appearance of at least four important novels by the author of "Waverley," the leading writer of the day. Lady Caroline kept a page and was violent enough to fracture his skull with a poker. Apart from the coterie of the Academy, Farington relies chiefly on what he picks up from others. He has no particular sense of humour, but in his solid way he is always gathering gossip and going about with unabated energy until he falls downstairs and his end is annotated by the stately piety of his niece.

FICTION

PORTRAIT IN A MIRROR. By CHARLES MORGAN. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

THIS novel is chiefly notable as an attempt to represent and analyse the internal and external symptoms of a love in which the higher and the lower instincts are so far apart that physical union leaves passion still ungratified. The failure to find the two instincts in combination forces the lovers to part—and, incidentally, to avoid a scandal—while they are still very fond of one another. "The girl you loved has not escaped or betrayed you," says Clare to Nigel on the last page. "When I am here no more, she will remain with you." Thus Clare realizes how much Nigel—a boy of eighteen when they had met, after her twenty-first birth-

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day three years before—had created for himself in his artist soul the ideal which he believed he had discovered in her lovely face.

Nigel Frew, the "supposed narrator," is a distinguished painter who now, more than fifty years after, recalls his earliest love-affair. The scene is set in one or another of three houses in the country—his father's "little place"; the big mansion in which he first meets Clare Sibrigh; and that of Henry Fullaton, a successful Victorian artist, whose son, Ned, Clare marries, at the urgent persuasion of kindly relatives who, having children of their own, do not wish to have her left on their hands.

The descriptions of well-to-do people in the days of Disraeli's second Premiership are brightly and aptly written. They include a great aunt, a purblind, "parded" mondaine, whose portrait Nigel achieves, while he is baffled in the protracted effort to paint Clare; an invalid girl who shows notable originality by not pining away in disappointed love; and a crushed husband.

The last chapter brings to mind Albert and Rosalinde in Gautier's most famous book and their great scene together; for the climax of Nigel and Clare's affection is also the end of their romance.

THE PRISONER IN THE OPAL. By A. E. W. MASON. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

MR. MASON holds a deservedly high place among the makers of mysteries, when he takes to that style of thing, since he is both ingenious in his plots and a romantic who can write and stage an effective background. "The Prisoner in the Opal," though it gives the expert critic an early hint or two of the malefactors who disturb the gaiety of a villa in the wine region of Bordeaux, will keep the reader guessing about the details of the crime and give him some good thrills towards the end. The French detective, Hanaud, is revived, and with his amateur assistant, Mr. Ricardo, supplies humorous relief. The latter is one of the virtuosos that Mr. Mason always does well, an epicurean in excitement who loves to see himself in a dramatic rôle and has at worst a smooth-running and swift Rolls-Royce. He can also correct Hanaud about English idioms. We dwell on this side of the book because with the increasing elaboration of the detective story it is apt to become tedious without some lighter stuff to relieve the tension.

PLUM BUN. By JESSIE REDMAN FAUSET. Elkin Mathews and Marrot. 7s. 6d.

WE do not know anything of the author, but this American story of hers offers a new theme to English readers and shows accomplishment both in style and arrangement. It sketches

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some Bohemian types in art circles with an eye both for humour and character, and the main theme, the treatment of coloured blood in America, is strikingly developed. Of two sisters, one shows her descent clearly, but the other does not, and so plans for an ambitious career as a white, and a good marriage in New York. She goes off on her own account, sacrifices everything to get rid of her negro connections, and is very nearly wrecked. The other sister is depicted with real charm, and the little touches of domestic affection in the book are delightful.

PECCAVI. By CHRIS MASSIE. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

THIS story of Bethnal Green in the 'nineties, when Socialism was a new and exciting creed, is well done in its London detail and somewhat highly coloured in its characters. We begin with a man fleeing from justice because he has smashed down his wife with a hammer, and his essential weakness is effectively contrasted with the strength of the woman who saves him. She is an unmarried mother who does useful and kindly work all round. These two are subtly conceived and explained. The rest of the characters, including a grandfather who dotes on a grandchild, and an uproarious giant of a parson, do not strike us as very real. The parson, however, whether meant so or not, is mighty offensive.

THE HOUSE ON TOLLARD RIDGE. By John Rhode. Bles. 7s. 6d.

IN this story an old man is murdered in a solitary house and a superintendent of police is clever enough to discover and secure a sailor who, by circumstantial evidence, should be the criminal. A second murder follows in the house just before the trial comes on, ending in a verdict of guilty. Then a famous investigator takes a hand in the case and gives it a very different appearance. The persons of the story are not numerous enough to raise many doubts about the real murderer; but it is well conceived in detail and written with ease. The absence of the usual supply of false clues is rather a relief, and the way in which the evidence is turned to new proof is quite ingenious.

SCIENCE

ASTROPHYSICS. By W. M. SMART, D.Sc., F.R.A.S. Benn. 6d.

THIS book is a brief summary of the advances which the spectroscope has made possible in the study of the heavens. Dr. Smart draws a fascinating picture of the immensities of stellar space and time, and describes, in clear language, the problems that

still confront the astronomer. We are told that stars vary surprisingly in density. In some cases a ton of their substance would barely fill a match-box, whilst others, like Betelgeuse, are of a tenuity only comparable with what we on earth consider a good vacuum. There are young stars and old stars; some are steadily pulsating; and the light, even of the nearest, reaches us from incredible distances. Thus, sunlight takes but eight minutes to traverse ninety million miles, while the light of the nearest star needs four years to bridge the intervening gulf of space. And the Andromeda Nebula, in order to send its message to our eyes, requires a period so enormous that it approaches a million light-years. Nor is this all: for the vast output of stellar energy necessitates the recasting of the theory of physics. The conservation of mass no longer holds good, and we are faced with the idea of a universe in which, to use the author's own words, matter "is slowly but surely melting away into radiation." "Is there," he asks, "a reverse process?" If not, it follows that our universe is steadily running down like some vast clock, "without the faintest prospect of ever being wound up again!"

OCEANS AND RIVERS. By E. G. R. TAYLOR. Benn. 6d.

THE modern science of hydrography deals with the water surfaces of the globe, and this little book summarizes the conclusions reached in a compact and readable form. We no longer believe, with Pliny, that "some rivers, from a real hatred of the sea, pass under it," and accurate knowledge is steadily replacing the picturesque conjectures of the early geographers. The economic importance of rivers has long been realized; some

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of them—as, for instance, the Nile—being the very life-blood of the countries through which they flow; while the marked effect of the salinity and temperature of sea-water on fish-breeding is now well known. The author has brought together much interesting information on these and kindred topics, including, by the way, some curious and interesting facts. Such are the influence of the saline constituents of river water on fertility, the occurrence of shark's teeth and whale's ear-bones in the red clay of the deep ocean floor, and the curious dune-wells of Holland, in which the water remains fresh, though its level obeys the pulsation of the tides.

POETRY

AFTER-THOUGHTS. By ROBERT BELL. Methuen. 4s. 6d.

FANCY in poetry has gone somewhat out of date. Perhaps we have all written at some time a thesis upon "Fancy and Imagination," and proved quite clearly that it is of little consequence beside its more highly destined sister of the mind. Yet when a book such as Mr. Bell's volume of poems comes to hand, we find ourselves immediately charmed; we read them aloud across the hearth; we interrupt everybody else in their private devotion to the latest novel—and are forgiven. The highest flights of Milton or Coleridge would not receive such tolerance. Fancy may be a little lower than the angels, but the angels are uncompanionable creatures on earth, and Mr. Bell is delightfully on earth making quaint and exquisitely polished conceits of the things we know best. Sometimes he goes beyond this, as in "Doomsday":

The thin, invisible trumpets sound
Across the meadows of the Spring,
And all the dead things underground
Stir to the great awakening;

And, loosed from the ties that bind,
The seeds with apprehension rise
To meet the judgment, and they find
The benediction of the skies.

But more often he sings neatly of cats and dogs, of birds and motorists; makes of the telegraph post a tree:

Its leaves are human fears and hopes
In sere and yellow envelopes.
Eve it remembers and the Devil—
It is the Tree of Good and Evil;

makes life now a box of matches, now a trout's leap, now a bird's nest. The insignificance of the thing chosen is itself part of the

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charm, for great things go into manageable size under his pen. Most charming of all, perhaps, is his valedictory verse wherein he chooses "another world wherein to try again."

But there's an inconspicuous little star
In Hyades, with an engaging wink
(I give no letter lest the place should grow
Too crowded, but it isn't very far
From great Aldebaran) and there, I think,
A man might make a creditable show.

There is more than charm in that, and, indeed, in all Mr. Bell's poetry.

H. S.

GENERAL

ARCHBISHOP DAVIDSON AND THE ENGLISH CHURCH. By Sidney Dark.
Philip Allan. 8s. 6d.

We are not usually in favour of lives of the living, but an Archbishop who has reigned for a quarter of a century and passed the normal span of life without losing his vigour may well be an exception. Mr. Dark, with a keen eye for character, thinks his subject the greatest man he has met; and as he takes a strong party point of view, his tribute to Lord Davidson, the cautious and diplomatic, is all the more striking. A few years ago the Archbishop might have been called by many a "trimmer"; lately, his work in keeping the Church together and as comprehensive as possible has been generally recognized even by those who would prefer an audacious prelate to a shrewd moderator able to hold his own with voice and pen in any company. Many extracts from speeches are given, and they remind us that a particularly severe judge of modern oratory called Dr. Davidson the best speaker he had ever heard. His early influence is shown to have been much greater than is generally known. He has not shirked responsibility, and declared himself to be responsible for any heretical appointment, when Dr. Henson's rise to a bishopric was the subject of heated controversy. With the advance of years he has set his face against heresy-hunting and broadened his views, e.g. concerning prayers for the dead. It is strange that so acute a tactician did not do better with the new Prayer Book in Parliament. Mr. Dark, however, tells us that the bishops' proposals, when finally presented to the Convocations two years since, "aroused no enthusiasm from any section of Church opinion," though he admits that the safe men of the centre voted steadily with the bishops. It remains to be seen how the new Archbishop will deal with a period of acute conflict. Meanwhile, it is all to the good that views should be expressed by those

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whose business it is to keep a vigilant watch on the conduct of the Church. *Sine ira et studio* should certainly be the motto of all who wish the Church well.

MUST ENGLAND'S BEAUTY PERISH ? A Plea on Behalf of the National Trust. Faber and Gwyer. 6s.

PROF. TREVELYAN and the publishers have done a good service in putting before readers the work of the National Trust, which preserves places of historic interest, like Bodiam Castle, or natural beauty, like Tennyson Down in the Isle of Wight. The Trust needs much wider support, and the plea is one that every person of taste and lover of England should recognize. There are difficulties about the work of preservation not generally known :—

The State, which remits death duty on pictures and art treasures of "national value," shows no such lenience for natural scenery, which is, forsooth, of no "natural value" at all !

We think that Mr. Baldwin, a great admirer of the English countryside, might lead a deputation to Mr. Winston Churchill on the subject. The Trust secures permanently things worth preserving, and though the Office of Works is actively interested in historic buildings, it has no power to protect any building occupied as a dwelling-house. The State declines to hold land and save it from the exploiter, and takes death duties from the Trust. But once paid, they will not recur. The Trust is unlike a municipal body, which may at one time be decent and at another outrageous; or a private owner, who may have an admirable conscience, but may leave his property to another anxious only for money. At present the Trust cannot from lack of means accept gifts which mean financial responsibility beyond its resources. There is no large central endowment, as there ought to be, to keep up a large number of small estates or to buy land before it gets into the hands of the exploiter. The country today is much uglier, the Professor points out, than it was one hundred years ago; and a century hence, but for the efforts of the Trust and such admirable institutions as the Scapa Society, which should not be forgotten, our descendants might have to gaze on a collection of horrors no tourist would want to visit. Visitors to the Lakes should realize what the Trust has done for them, and rejoice that the Sty Head Pass has not been spoilt by the road recently proposed. A keen eye should be kept on the enterprise due to the vast increase of motor traffic, and the concrete which, the Professor notes, has spoilt a lovely road in Cornwall should be duly cursed. Every lover of England who knows its beauties should recognize in the list of Trust properties, given at the end,

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scenery that he has been able to enjoy, and note that the annual subscribers are fewer than 1,000 in number.

LA VIE ET LES VOYAGES DU CAPITAINE COOK. By MAURICE THIÉRY.
Paris: Pierre Roger. 15 francs.

M. THIÉRY has gone deep into the literature of his subject and produced an admirably vivid account of Cook, selecting the notable things and making his points of irony or compliment with the neatness of French. Cook's wife was "rose et blonde comme peuvent l'être les femmes d'Angleterre." A storm during his second voyage gave the disagreeable pair of Forsters a chance to "exhale once more their charming humour." The word "subtiliser" is pretty for the clever priggish of Tahiti and elsewhere which worried him so much. The distinguished French explorer, Bougainville, was his predecessor in the South Seas, and it is pointed out that France during the American War gave orders that Cook's vessel should not be interfered with—a fine tribute to scientific research.

Rightly, stress is laid on Cook's care of his men and successful fight against scurvy. He himself, as a Yorkshireman, was lucky in possessing an impregnable stomach and in finding an officer for patron who was not only a "compatriot," but also of the same county. Such recognition reduces the waiting and wasted time of first-rate talent. Cook was a severe disciplinarian, but essentially kindly when it was possible to forgive. To persuade conservative sailors to take to novelties in food was, as he noted, a real feat. The tribute to his virtues and exploits quoted from one of his lieutenants is, as M. Thiéry notes, the best of many. Cook might be compared with the Elizabethan mariners. So considered, he would surpass them in his humanity and regard for ignorant islanders; but with the pen he had none of their vigour and eloquence. His accounts are full of good sense, but heavily sententious; they lack the agreeable and cultivated lightness of M. Thiéry, who would never describe the liquor of coco-nuts as "an excellent *succedaneum* for any artificial beverage."

The illustrations resembling old-fashioned woodcuts are quaintly effective.

THE ENGLISH CATALOGUE OF BOOKS FOR 1928. Edited by JAMES D. STUART. The Publishers' Circular. 15s.

THIS long-established work of reference is a great boon to all who have to do with books, for without it long search might have to be made for something published last year, and even the best memory finds it difficult to retain such details of the past. A high standard of accuracy is maintained and the cross-references

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are ample. The analysis of the books of the year is, as usual, very interesting. The total is 14,399, and fiction alone accounts for 3,529 items, which is far too much. We notice that such universal themes as the Bible or Shakespeare or London attract much less attention than Mr. Edgar Wallace, who is responsible for eighty-one headings. This must be a "record," like the total above-mentioned. It is one that may be viewed with mixed feelings. Science is the subject in which the most important advances are being made today; and it shows a decline, like Religion and Medicine. However, a book which is read and re-read may have more influence than a crowd of novels or indifferent rehashes of popular themes.

The new "Book Society" which is to offer readers one good book each month, chosen by a board of five experts, seems to us quite a good idea. Today far too many novels are published, while reviewers speak with very different voices and with a confidence that does not always go with competence. So the public is confused and prefers often to take advice from a friend. Here is a competent board which will correct individual exaggerations of merit and will not rely solely on established names. The American Club which the "Book Society" follows has recommended several writers previously unknown, and it is pleasant to hear that the English critics are prepared to do the same. The work of the young novelist is often lost in the jungle of fiction good, bad, and indifferent. Most writers, as things go today, can get a good notice somewhere, but not a notice that inspires confidence as to quality. We wish the board success in a difficult task which every beginner regards as easy.

Although every precaution is taken, the Editor will not be responsible for the loss or damage of manuscripts sent in for consideration; nor can he undertake to return manuscripts which are not accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.